Sandwell
CHRONICLE

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BRENDON BACKING FORGET ME NOT APPEAL IN AID OF HOSPICE

Albion legend Brendon Batson with his wife Cecily

WEST Bromwich Albion legend Brendon Batson is backing a fundraising appeal in aid of the hospice which cared for his late wife.

The 64-year-old's wife of 38 years Cecily in September 2009 died after being diagnosed with an aggressive brain tumour.

She was looked after by nurses from Birmingham St Mary's Hospice who made her as comfortable as possible at home.

The appeal is giving people the chance to buy crafted wrought iron Forget Me Not flowers to celebrate the lives of loved ones who are no longer with us.

The 1,500 flowers will then go on display at Brindleyplace's central square from April 24 to May 1 and by making a donation ahead of that, people can have their own keepsake flower dedicated to their loved one. The colourful flowers have been designed and crafted by the Shropshire-based British Ironwork Centre. Mr Batson, who made 220 appearances for the Baggies, said he was pleased to support the appeal.

"When my beloved wife Cecily was diagnosed with a brain tumour back in 2009, I was touched by the care and support from nurses at the hospice allowing for her to be cared for at home.

"Each 'Forget Me Not' symbolises the celebration of a loved one and I'll be dedicating my flower to Cecily," he added.

Birmingham St Mary's Hospice is an independent charity providing hospice care to people across Birmingham and Sandwell. Caring for around 1,200 people a year, many hospice patients remain at home for much of their illness, where they are supported by the community palliative care and Hospice at Home teams, who work in conjunction with GPs, consultants and other medical professionals.

Birmingham St Mary's Hospice is an independent charity providing hospice care to people across Birmingham and Sandwell. Hospice care is free of charge to all patients and relatives so staff currently need to raise £8 million annually to fund this vital care.

Forget Me Not flowers are now available for a donation from www.birminghamhospice.org.uk/forgetmenot

Safety fears as vehicles parked on corners of junctions

'CHAOS' OF CARS OUTSIDE SCHOOL

PARKING outside a school has been described as 'chaotic' with parents parking on junctions and incidents of road rage.

Sundeep Samra, whose son attends Holly Lodge High School in Smethwick, has even resorted to filming the problems in a bid to get a council reaction. She said: "Parents are parking on the corners of the junctions so you can't see down the road, and you have 1,500 children using the road at the same time.

"It is chaotic and I've asked the council to come down but nothing is being done about it. So I started filming it one day. But I was just shouted at by other parents."

A reporting team visited the school during an afternoon pick-up and saw that badly parked cars were blocking a bus from driving down Holly Lane.

The school has acknowledged the problems, while Sandwell Council says it is increasing patrols by officers and their CCTV car around the school.

By Judith Hawkins

Approaches

Headteacher Paul Shone said: "The school has been concerned for a number of years about the level of parking outside the school. We have made approaches to the Highways Department of the Local Authority who have looked at the matter.

"They have said that we could extend the zig-zag lines further along the road outside the school however this would speed traffic up and they would prefer to keep it this way, slowing the traffic down to prevent a higher level impact collision.

"We are concerned at the nature and way that people park around corners and on junctions which has potential to obstruct buses and cause problems. We fully support the concerns raised and have written to parents in the past asking them to park further away from school, especially since the pavements are very narrow. It is good to see parents getting involved and sharing these concerns."

Councillor David Hosell, cabinet member for highways and environment in Sandwell said: "We would urge all parents to park legally and safely and not to risk children's safety by parking dangerously and irresponsibly.

"We are aware of parking issues around schools in Sandwell and have invested £50,000 in a camera car that uses CCTV enforcement. Holly Lane and roads around Holly Lodge High school are visited regularly by the CCTV camera car. A rota is operated to ensure each school can be visited as often as possible. We are increasing our patrols around the school using both our CCTV car and officers."

A view of the traffic congestion outside Holly Lodge High School, Holly Lane, Smethwick with cars parked on junctions

POLITICS

Spellar in call to be 'Brexit ready'

A SANDWELL MP has urged the Government to ensure the country is 'Brexit ready' after Downing Street announced the Prime Minister will trigger Article 50 next week.

Theresa May is set to start the historic process of pulling the UK out of the EU on March 29. It comes nine months after the country voted to leave the bloc in the June 23 referendum.

Warley Labour MP John Spellar said: "It is important the Government turns its attentions to ensuring the UK is working efficiently enough to compete in the post-Brexit world." The move was announced after Britain's envoy to Brussels, Sir Tim Barrow, informed the office of EU President Donald Tusk of the PM's intentions.

CONSTRUCTION

More staff needed for super hospital

A CALL has been made for more construction staff to complete the £350 million Midland Metropolitan Hospital.

Taking to Twitter, Sandwell Council revealed that there were still vacancies for those with construction and plant operation skills at the super hospital in Smethwick, which is due to open in October 2018.

The vacancies are open to those who have completed the Construction Skills Certification Scheme or Construction Plant Competence Scheme.

COUNCIL

Garden waste bins collections return

GARDEN waste collections in a Black Country borough have got under way in time for spring gardening – and will run until November. In Sandwell, the garden waste bins are collected every two weeks. Residents can check when their collections are at www.sandwell.gov.uk/binday

If residents have large amounts of heavy garden waste then it can be split over several collections or taken to the tip at Shidas Lane in Oldbury, open 8am to 4pm daily, including weekends.

Residents are reminded that garden waste should be loose inside the bin and old plant pots cannot be recycled.

INSIDE

MAYOR SHOWS PADDY POWER

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Watson urges Ofcom to be thorough

Tom Watson, in takeover call

TOM Watson says it is vital that Ofcom's investigation into Rupert Murdoch's 21st Century Fox's takeover bid for Sky takes into account a thorough examination of corporate governance.

Labour's shadow culture secretary welcomed the Government's intervention on the proposed deal, which would see Fox pay £11.7 billion for the 61 per cent stake in Sky it does not already own.

However, West Bromwich East MP Mr Watson said it was 'regrettable' that Ofcom will only have 40 days to conduct a 'fit and proper person' test on management. He has asked for assurances that the inquiry will look at corporate governance, having previously raised concerns over Mr Murdoch's involvement in the phone hacking scandal.

Culture Secretary Karen Bradley said she had called the investigation as she was not satisfied her concerns surrounding media plurality and commitment to broadcasting standards were being addressed.

Announcing the investigation in the Commons, Ms Bradley said: "While the representations from 21st Century Fox highlighted areas where it contested the position taken in my minded-to letter, none of the representations have led me to dismiss the concerns I have regarding the two public interest grounds I previously specified.

"I am of the view that it remains both important, given the issues raised, and wholly appropriate for me to seek comprehensive advice from Ofcom on these public interest considerations and from the Competition and Markets Authority, CMA, on jurisdiction issues."

Ofcom will have up to May 16 to report back to Ms Bradley on a number of public interest concerns.

Rate of empty shops among worst in UK

WEST Bromwich has the second highest number of empty shops in the West Midlands, new figures have revealed.

Data from the Local Data Company (LDC) shows that with a 22.2 per cent vacancy rate, West Bromwich is among the worst towns for retail vacancies in the entire country.

It comes only second to Walsall in the West Midlands, with a retail vacancy rate of 22.8 per cent. The statistics relate to the vacancy rates in 2016, and although still very high are an improvement as previous figures from the LDC.

In 2015 the vacancy rate in West Bromwich was 2.7 per cent higher, and in Walsall it was 3.2 per cent higher.

Council leader, Steve Eling said: "It's largely because of Queen Square, that's the big problem, with most of the empty shops there. It has now got new owners and they are doing what they can. Elsewhere in West Bromwich it is looking really good, with New Square having nearly all of the shops filled and King's Square too.

Struggling

"It is a concern, as it is for high streets up and down the country which are all struggling."

Five shops a day were lost from Britain's high streets in 2016, but since Brexit there seems to have been a reverse in this trend, according to the LDC. Their latest annual report on Great Britain's retail and leisure trends shows how the run up to Brexit saw an increase in the number of shops closing, where it reached a peak at the time of the referendum in mid-2016.

Yet their final quarter of the year, the most important for many retailers, saw more shops opening and closing and the positive trend has continued into 2017.

Matthew Hopkinson of LDC, said: "It was clear at the halfway stage in 2016 that both openings and closures had slowed sharply by the date of the EU referendum vote. In a year of surprises, what followed was a bump after the slump. Both openings and closures rose back to early-year levels in the autumn, but this time openings had the upper hand and began to correct the net losses of the mid-year trough. It was not enough to fill the gap, but by Christmas it had begun to repair the damage."

Eyesore former pub site up for sale

The vandal-magnet building which was once the Royal Oak Inn Pub on Whitehall Road in West Bromwich

AN arson-stricken former pub has been put on the market for more than £200,000 – with hopes of it being redeveloped.

The Royal Oak, on Whitehall Road in Tipton, has been struck by vandals in recent months after it has stood in a crumbling derelict state for more than 10 years. It is has now been put on the market with The Property Shop along with the two adjoining houses for £245,000.

Councillor Joanne Hadley, who represents the Great Bridge ward, branded it an eyesore. She said: "I wanted them to put a Section 215 on it and get it pulled down. It has stood in such a state for too long now.

"It was constantly being set alight to at one point.

"I am happy that as long as the new person who buys it is given a set amount of time to do something with it – either develop or demolish. It is just a complete eyesore. There are too many derelict properties in Sandwell."

The pub has been reduced to a wreck and bears the scars of previous arson attacks, including a massive hole in its roof. Some of the building's walls have also fallen in.

Concerns were also raised by residents last year as the site was branded dangerous by West Midlands Fire Service.

Residents and councillors have been left frustrated by the lack of action over the pub.

Planners at Sandwell Council were asked to issue a section 215 maintenance notice to the owners, which would require it to either be repaired or knocked down, otherwise the council would do it and send the owners the bill.

Jail for raids by one-man crime wave drug addict

A PROLIFIC burglar who broke into seven homes in 12 days has started a four and a half year jail sentence.

Wayne Porter attacked and robbed an 83-year-old man at one of the addresses and stole jewellery of immense sentimental value from a recently bereaved widower at another, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

"It was a short burst of intense activity," said Mr Ian Ball, prosecuting.

Porter made random calls at homes in the West Bromwich and Tipton area, smashing windows to get in when he thought the address was empty, continued the prosecutor.

The 31-year-old cut himself at the scene of several of the crimes leaving tell-tale blood stains that matched his DNA and led to his arrest. The one-man crime wave began at Dovecote Close, Tipton on November 9 where there was an untidy search but nothing was stolen. However, in subsequent raids Porter did manage to steal valuable items such as a £1,400 computer.

Mr Simon Burch, defending, said Porter had been hooked on Class A drugs since the age of 15 and turned to crime to feed the habit.

The defendant from Roshven Road, Balsall Heath, who had a string of previous convictions and was on licence from jail at the time, admitted six burglaries and a robbery together with the theft of chocolate valued at £290 from a Poundland store. Recorder Justin Widoger said: "People must be protected in their own home, especially the elderly."

Kicking off for sports sessions

A SPORTS club aimed at people with learning disabilities is being launched in Tipton. Staff at Farley Park Lodge Community Centre, in Great Bridge, are hosting the new sports sessions.

The project is the latest step in an overall vision to make Farley Park Lodge a centre for healthy eating and exercise. It currently runs activities for young and older people.

The new sports sessions start on Wednesday 29 March and run from 12-2pm. Councillor Preet Gill, Sandwell Council's cabinet member for public health and protection, said: "This will be a much-welcomed new activity to help people with additional needs keep healthy." For more information, contact Great Bridge Community Forum on 0121 532 4023.

Street becoming one-way system

A BUSY Smethwick street is being changed to one-way. Smethwick Police have reminded the public the rules around Corbett Street are being altered. It is also a warning to those driving or walking down the road who may not have been aware.

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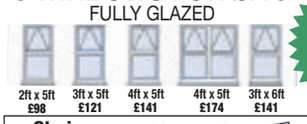

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Virus cases go up after cuts to hand gel budget

A BLACK Country hospital saved almost £10,000 from its hand gel budget – while the number of norovirus cases at the hospital increased.

Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust reduced the amount it spent on the anti-bacterial hand gels at Sandwell General Hospital from £40,000 in 2015 to £30,000 last year.

While the number of Norovirus cases reported at the hospital increased from 16 to 22. The decision to make cuts was defended by the hospital trust, which said day-to-day operations 'have not been affected'.

Elaine Newell, chief nurse at Sandwell General Hospital, said: "As part of our procurement processes we regularly review the cost effectiveness of the products we use to ensure best value for money. This does not affect the day-to-day operations of our hospitals. We don't compromise on patient safety when making a decision on the product to use."

Similarly, The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, which runs Wolverhampton New Cross, spent just under £40,000 on the gel in 2015, before cutting it to £35,000 last year.

There were 91 Norovirus cases at the hospital in 2015, before going down to 82 last year.

Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust, which manages Walsall Manor Hospital, also made savings, cutting almost £2,000 from a spend of just over £22,000 in 2015. At Walsall Manor, there were 44 Norovirus cases in 2015, and then 51 last year.

Apprenticeships event success

MORE than a hundred people signed up for apprenticeships at an event at Sandwell Council House in Oldbury.

There were 109 enrolments on the council's programme to help young people onto the career ladder with apprenticeships both with the council and local businesses.

Rachel Davies aged 20, from Rowley Regis, was at the event.

She said: "Today has been very helpful to me. It's opened my mind up to go for my dreams, to never give up and always believe in yourself and achieve more."

More than 200 people came through the doors throughout the day, including parents and grandparents supporting young people interested in starting an apprenticeship.

Grammatically correct for pop

POP band London Grammar are in Birmingham as one of three concerts to launch their second album. Tickets for the Birmingham Town Hall performance on April 4 go on sale tomorrow, Friday.

Ancient locket declared treasure trove

The locket found in Shropshire

A 300-YEAR-OLD locket discovered by an Oldbury metal detectorist has been declared treasure trove by a coroner.

Inscribed with the words 'Yours or Not Mine', the silver love token was found by Shawn Paynter in a field near Greete, close to Ludlow.

Mr Paynter had been on a club rally in the area on January 31 last year when he came across the find.

The locket, which measures 29.52mm in height and 19.52mm in width is thought to date back to the 17th century. It is decorated with hearts, flowers, zig zags and notches.

It was declared treasure at an inquest held at Shirehall in Shrewsbury by John Ellery, senior coroner for Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin.

As was a dozen silver coins, dating back to the times of Henry VIII discovered by a farm labourer out with his metal detector. David Franklin, 34, had taken up the hobby of metal detectoring a year before he made his find on land also near Ludlow.

After a fruitless day spent scouring nearby fields, he had almost given up and was walking through woodland when the machine went off. So he started to dig.

Underneath the foliage and loam and buried about six to eight inches below the surface he found the first of his coins.

The inquest heard that the hoard was probably a purse that had contained 19 silver shillings and groats from the late Tudor period.

A number of the coins were from the reign of Queen Mary I and several were from the reign of Elizabeth I. A fragmented coin was dated to the reign of Henry VIII.

Homes for elderly due at former landfill site

DOZENS of homes for the elderly are set to be built on a disused landfill site.

The land, off Moor Lane in Rowley Regis, will be used for a mixture of 60 one bedroom flats and 30 two bedroom flats with communal facilities for adult social care.

The Sandwell Council scheme was due to be discussed at a council meeting on Tuesday.

A report on the plans states: "The site was historically used for landfill purposes and this proposal would result in it being brought back into beneficial use and provide the opportunity to improve the remaining open space.

"The development of an extra care scheme will provide support for older people to address the future needs of vulnerable adults as identified in the accommodation and support strategy and contribute towards the facing the future savings."

Design proposals are currently being drawn up.

The site, which is near Rowley Regis Hospital, has been occupied by travelling circuses and fairgrounds, while fears over travellers setting up camp there have been raised.

Successes

Council leader, Steve Eling, said: "It is part of our extra care scheme, a number of which we have in Sandwell.

"It is for elderly people who need a lot of care but would rather be in their own flat with care facilities rather than in a care home.

"The scheme is one of the real successes in Sandwell's care services. We have got a lot of elderly people in the borough and this is really a positive move."

Councillor Eling added: "There is a national social care crisis, but we haven't got that problem in Sandwell – we haven't got bed-blocking, because of our social care provision and our extra care scheme. We are an example to other areas."

The authority recently approved a 4.99 per cent council taxi rise, which includes three per cent to fund social care. It will mean households paying around £1 a week extra from April.

The Moor Lane site is in a residential area close to Blackheath town centre. Similar developments have already been created by the council in Smethwick, West Bromwich and Tipton. Councillor Eling added: "We haven't got one of these type of facilities in that part of the borough."

Fans Steve Molineux, Susan Molineux, Paul Farrow and Laura Farrow

Rod fans Julie Cartwright and Elaine Wilson-Duncan

Tonight's the night for Rod weekend

FANS of Sir Rod Stewart gathered in force in the Black Country to celebrate the Maggie May singer, who has been making music across seven decades.

Hundreds turned out donning dodgy blonde wigs and tartan kilts as The Rod Stewart Fan Club Big Weekend returned for its annual get together over the weekend at The Saddlers Club.

This year marked the 17th annual event, with it taking residence at the The Saddlers Club for the seventh consecutive year.

Fans from Walsall to Mexico, with a shared passion for the music of the 72-year-old former Faces frontman, sang along to hits including Stay With Me, Sailing and Some Guys Have All The Luck.

Mary Cady, Rod Stewart's sister, turned up in support of the meeting, which has raised thousands of pounds for charity. As a regular attendee of the meetings, she got on stage to pick out various raffle winners.

Performing on the night were Cregan & Co, featuring Jim Cregan, former co-writer and guitarist with Rod Stewart.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Dragonboat race will aid appeal

ALL proceeds from the annual dragonboat race in the centre of Birmingham are to go to the Cure Leukaemia appeal to raise £1 million to help expand the Centre for Clinical Haematology in the city.

The race on the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal at Brindley Place takes place on June 24 from 10am and a target of raising £100,000 has been set.

The 18th annual event is now open to entries from teams from businesses in the area. It is sponsored by Deutsche Bank and runs from Gas Street Basin to the Barclaycard Arena.

Work begins to build 167 homes

WORK to build more than 160 homes in Smethwick has begun. The construction of 167 houses, which vary from two, three, to four bedrooms, has got under way in Mafeking Road by developer Countryside.

The work has been welcomed by ward councillors. St Paul's councillor Zahoor Ahmed said the houses will help 'uplift' the area.

"This is good news for the community and local people," said Councillor Ahmed. "There is always demand for housing. We as councillors welcome progress in the area."

Passenger delays after services hit

RAIL passengers faced delays as services were cancelled after trespassers made their way onto train lines. Train operator London Midland reported trespassers on the rail tracks between Wolverhampton and Birmingham New Street on Friday night.

Trespassers were also reported on the line between Solihull and Birmingham Moor Street, and at Acocks Green. As a result, the train service between Birmingham New Street to Liverpool Lime Street was cancelled.

Time to get dirty and raise funds

A FIVE-KILOMETRE race for women which raises money for Cancer Research UK is coming to Sandwell. The Race for Life – Pretty Muddy event will be held at Sandwell Valley on September 30. It will be a 5k obstacle course. Participants must be aged at least 13 to enter. Entry costs £10 for girls up to 15, and anyone aged 16 and over will be charged £19.99. To sign up visit raceforlife.org where details of other races can also be found.

WBI House music

IT'S likely to be standing room only for top Black Country folk artists, Crowded House Music, at the West Bromwich Institute on Tuesday.

The show, which marks the grand finale of the 2016-17 season of events, features the duo of Mick Burrows and Richard Gibbons, and starts at 7.30pm at the West Bromwich Central Library, entrance via the rear door, price £3 per ticket.

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COUNTY NEWS

Volunteers sought for canal clear-up

VOLUNTEERS are being sought over the first weekend of April, to clean up the canals of the West Midlands.

Waterway Recovery Group volunteers will be working from Wednesfield on the Wyrley and Essington Canal to Horseley Fields Junction up to Wolverhampton locks and then down to the Bradley Arm up to the workshop. Last year 70 volunteers spent two days removing 44 tonnes of rubbish from Walsall Canal.

Contact Chris Morgan on 07974 111 354 or email cbmorgan@sky.com for more information.

HS2 hub hopes for 77,000 jobs

AN ambitious 20-year growth plan based on the arrival of HS2 in the West Midlands could create up to 77,500 jobs, it has been claimed.

The plan for the UK Central Hub – which takes in Solihull, Birmingham Airport, the NEC, Jaguar Land Rover and the proposed new HS2 Interchange Station – was unveiled last week at the MIPIM international property show in Cannes.

Supporters say it could add £4.1 billion to the local economy, taking in 775,000 sq m of development land and provide space for up to 4,000 homes.

Third of farmers hit by dumping

MORE than a third of farming businesses in the West Midlands and Staffordshire claim to have had illegal waste dumped on their land in the last three years, research shows.

An awareness campaign has been launched in the affected communities who are largely unaware that they are open to fines, prosecution and even imprisonment due to ignorance of the 'duty of care' law. A new survey commissioned by 'right Waste, right Place' shows owners are increasingly turning to councils for help.

Folk festival to feed fans' imagination

THE Imagined Isle folk festival is back in Birmingham Town Hall from May 12 to 14, featuring acts such as Dan Walshon Friday.

Saturday includes folk legends Fairport Convention's 50th anniversary tour concert with support from Benji Kirkpatrick at 7.30pm. The Sunday sees a concert from former Bellowhead singer Jon Boden at 2.30pm.

Tickets are available for the individual concerts or for the weekend at £58 from the box office on 0121 780 3333.

Scientific schools

FIFTY-EIGHT schools from across the West Midlands took part in Demo Day, which enabled pupils to take part in science activities, with practical hands-on science demonstrations.

Last Thursday's event was organised by the British Science Association (BSA) as part of British Science Week.

Hospital is top for flu vaccinations

A HOSPITAL has been ranked the top in the country for vaccinating its front line staff against flu.

Figures published by Department of Health revealed that over 95 per cent of the front line staff at Birmingham Children's Hospital were vaccinated, over 30 per cent higher than the national figure of over 63 per cent.

The six-month campaign kicked off in September 2016 and involved a 'jab-a-thon', where more than 1,000 staff received their vaccinations in the first week.

Having recently integrated with Birmingham Women's Hospital to form Birmingham Women's and Children's NHS Foundation Trust, the campaign ran across both hospitals, with the Women's also securing a record uptake of 68 per cent front line staff vaccinated.

This means together the hospitals have managed to secure around 40,000 tetanus vaccines in total.

Mary Hobin, head of nursing and lead for the flu campaign at Birmingham Women's and Children's NHS Foundation Trust, said: "We are so proud of all of our incredible staff for taking responsibility to protect themselves, our women, children and families, their colleagues and their own families from flu. As we well know, flu can be a nasty and sometimes life-threatening bug, especially for the vulnerable people we care for, so it's really important we do everything we can to protect everybody. This year's campaign really hit home with many of us and has meant we could do even more to protect not just women, children and families in this country, but mums and babies in Africa too."

New rules see tougher tests for taxi drivers

By Judith Hawkins

TAXI drivers in Sandwell will have to pass a tougher test proving knowledge of the area, good English – and will also have a dress code.

The rules on clothing, footwear and personal hygiene has been branded 'ridiculous' by taxi chiefs.

They will also be required to undertake training on issues around child sexual exploitation and disability as part of the new Sandwell Council rules.

There will also be ban on tinted windows and the council says it will no longer be accepting driving experience in other countries. Prospective cabbies must have held a full UK licence for two years and will have to pay for the suitability test.

Existing drivers with serious criminal offences are to have their licences reviewed by the council's licensing committee. Shaz Saleem, of the West Midlands Taxi Drivers Association, said: "Some of the ideas in these new policies are ridiculous. Having a dress code is ridiculous. That has nothing to do with customers' safety."

Priorities

Mr Saleem welcomed improvements to the knowledge test, but said drivers should not have to pay extra as it should be part of the licence.

Councillor Preet Gill, cabinet member for public health and protection, said: "The public's safety is at the top of our priorities. Something which I think is really important is that they will now have to go through CSE training. We have started rolling it out gradually but it will now be something they all have to do."

The current verbal knowledge test requires the applicant for a driver's licence to answer 10 questions based on the law and conditions attached to the licence. Any applicants must answer eight questions correctly in order to pass the test, and must do so within three attempts.

But this current knowledge test does not contain any arithmetic, Highway Code, or location questions. The tinted windows rule does not apply to limos or those vehicles already fitted with them prior to the new rules.

Event goes off with a Big Bang at fair

Seen at the NEC's Big Bang Fair, is lecturer and radiographer AJ Wallace, from Birmingham City University

THOUSANDS of students from across the Black Country got a glimpse into the exciting world of science and maths at this year's Big Bang Fair. The event, held at Birmingham's NEC, aimed to show children how a love of the two subjects can lead to careers.

Students were able to take part in a variety of activities and workshops run by hundreds of science and engineering-based companies.

They could even try their hand at surgery, identifying body parts in a gooey rubber doll to develop their biology skills. Birmingham City University put on the workshop, also teaching children about the skeleton and x-rays. AJ Wallace, radiographer and lecturer, said: "We come here to show how an interest in biology can lead to careers in medicine. We look to require and train paramedics, nurses to doctors and other roles such as radiography."

Justin Quineel, with his i-scura

Engineers from JCB were also on hand to show students how to build their own mini-digger and learn about a career with the firm.

Simon Wood, registrations manager at JCB, said: "I think there is a misconception that all engineers are male when in fact women are award-winning engineers with us."

Tata consultancy and Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) were on hand to show how thermal imaging cameras can be used to show the naturally occurring contours in sand and how technology is advancing in the industry.

Cameron Hargreaves, application manager for JLR, said: "The technology makes an everyday box of sand, which children love, into a colourful example of how the technology works to explore natural contours in the land."

Officers in swoop on motorbike menaces

SEVEN suspected motorbike menaces were arrested from their homes during morning raids – as West Midlands Police underlines its commitment to tackle lawless road rallies.

Most were detained at addresses in Birmingham and one picked up in Leicester in the latest phase of police action targeting off-road bikers who brought chaos to the region's roads during so called 'ride out' gatherings.

The men, aged between 19 and 25, were arrested last Friday on suspicion of causing a public nuisance.

They are the latest group suspected of being involved in illegal motorbike rallies that last year saw louts taking to the streets on scramblers, pit bikes, mini motos and quad bikes.

In December, West Midlands Police executed dozens of warrants across the region that led to the arrest of 28 suspects and the seizure of 27 bikes.

Sgt Adam Jobson said: "Those arrested remain on police bail; we are working closely with prosecutors to secure charges against them and illustrate that this type of behaviour is dangerous and won't be tolerated.

"We've seen off-road bikers clogging up our roads, intimidating other road users, jumping red lights, speeding and pulling stunts in the street. It's totally unacceptable.

"We now have anti-social motoring and street racing injunctions in force across the whole of Solihull, Birmingham and the Black Country – and several people have been handed suspended jail terms and heavy fines for breaching the injunctions."

Homes scheme nearly finished

A MAJOR project has taken a step nearer completion – with the final phase of the development getting under way.

The last phase of development in Perry Common in Kingstanding will see land off Witton Lodge Road and Dovedale Road revamped for 166 new homes – 77 social homes for rent and 89 for sale.

The project has brought together Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust, Lovell Partnerships and residents of Perry Common through the Witton Lodge Community Association.

Council chiefs have said construction work will finish no later than summer 2018 and improvement works to the public open space will be completed in autumn 2018.

Home town show for comedian Craig

BRUMMIE comedian Craig Deeley headlines a comedy event tonight. He will be performing stand up at The Anchor in Bradford Street, Digbeth, at 8pm. Tickets are £5 on the door with the evening also featuring Marshall B Anderson and Kate Findlay.

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Uni brings in £3.5bn each year for UK economy

THE University of Birmingham contributes £3.5 billion to the UK economy every year – enough to build seven flagship hospitals or 140 new secondary schools, new figures show.

A report published following research carried out by London Economics reveals that the country's first civic university now supports 15,545 jobs in the West Midlands – almost one in 50 jobs in Birmingham.

The report, which measured the economic impact of the University on the city of Birmingham and the West Midlands region during the 2014/15 academic year, was launched at the university's annual meeting.

London Economics placed the value of the University's international undergraduate students at more than £160 million in 2014/15.

The University's teaching contributes £1.34 billion to the UK economy, while its research and knowledge transfer activity is worth £885 million, with every £1 million of investment from UK Research Councils generating an additional £12 million to the economy.

Speaking at the university's annual meeting, vice chancellor, Professor Sir David Eastwood, said: "The £3.5 billion figure clearly demonstrates that the University of Birmingham is not only a major economic force in the region, but also nationally and internationally.

"We are building talent and skills in the region. Almost one in 50 jobs in Birmingham depend on the University."

Chiefs look into games possibility

COUNCIL bosses in Birmingham are looking into the possibility of hosting the Commonwealth Games in 2022.

It comes as the Commonwealth Games Federation announced the city of Durban, in South Africa, which was due to host the sports event, did not meet criteria set by the CGF.

Councillor Ian Ward, deputy leader of Birmingham City Council, said: "We are aware of the decision to seek a new host for the 2022 games.

"Here in Birmingham we are already in the advanced stages of producing a detailed feasibility study on what would be needed. That is due to be completed in the coming weeks and we are in close contact with the Government about the developing situation."

Why not join up with Ramblers?

THE Sandwell group of the Ramblers is seeking more members. The group organises regular walks within and outside the borough to help people stay healthy. For details visit www.sandwell ramblers.org.uk/join

Stoford chosen for Typhoo Wharf project

Business representatives on site

OFFICES, bars and restaurants, artist studios and homes are planned on the canalside site in Birmingham city centre where tea used to arrive in the second city by narrowboat from London.

Birmingham-based Stoford Developments has been appointed to deliver the £200 million redevelopment of property around Typhoo Wharf.

The Gooch Estate, owners of more than 10 acres of land in Digbeth, has selected Stoford as its development partner for the sites including Typhoo Wharf and the former Typhoo Tea building together with the adjoining canal basin.

Typhoo Wharf will almost immediately adjoin the proposed HS2 Curzon Station. It has been identified as a premier strategic regeneration opportunity and key catalyst for growth within Birmingham City Council's Big City Plan, near Birmingham Curzon, the new rail terminus for HS2 at the heart of the city.

At least a million sq ft of development is anticipated, which will include Grade A office space, small and medium-sized business incubator space, bars and restaurants, artist studios and homes. It is expected to attract major inward investment into the Digbeth area and create hundreds of jobs.

A planning application will be prepared in the summer and work is proposed to start on site in mid 2018.

The original 1930s building will be converted and new buildings will follow. The announcement was being made to potential investors by the Midlands UK delegation at international property convention MIPIM in Cannes, France.

Jail for member of gang part of 'crime academy'

A MAN from from the Black Country has been jailed for more than eight years for his part in a Romanian crime gang which bagged £3million in jewellery shop raids across the country.

In 14 months the 'extremely organised' gang believed to have been trained at an 'Romanian Crime Academy' hit 11 stores.

They employed advanced strategies including cycling to their targets, cordoning off roads with industrial cables to reduce traffic and witnesses, and even lighting fires to distract emergency services.

The group would also pitch themselves up in tents two to three miles away and would bury their waste to avoid leaving traces of DNA.

Among the gang was Vasile Daniel Cardos, aged, 26, from Halesowen Street, Rowley Regis who was sentenced on Friday to eight years and two months in prison for conspiracy to commit burglaries. Four others, of no fixed address, were handed the same punishment.

Aggravated

They are Bogdan Costel Neagu, aged 24, Ioan Bucuresteanu, aged 24, Silvu Ioan Acatrinei, aged 20, and Andrei Florin Tifui, aged 28.

Ioachim Karp, aged 19, also of no fixed address, was sentenced to six years and six months for aggravated burglary and conspiracy. A further man is due to be sentenced on March 28.

Detective Chief Inspector Ricky Fields, from Staffordshire Police's Force Safeguarding and Investigation, said: "We're dealing with a group of individuals who are extremely organised and forensically aware," he said.

"They went to great lengths and employed an interesting MO in an attempt to avoid detection. The group could be linked to the crime academy in Romania as several of the members came from the same region of the country and employed similar strategies.

"The Romanian Crime Academy recruits men and provides a strict code for its members as well as training in numerous techniques, such as avoiding being followed as well as understanding forensic evidence. They employed a number of strategies including cycling to the scenes of their crimes and cordoning off sections of road to reduce traffic and observers."

The gang targeted Beaverbrooks, Fraser Hart and Goldsmiths chains as well as independent traders.

Pioneering recycling process starts

The PHS recycling site – the first in the UK to be able to handle feminine hygiene products

A MULTI-MILLION pound investment has created a recycling site in the Black Country.

The site in West Bromwich will be the first in the UK able to handle feminine hygiene products.

Currently hundreds of millions of tampons, pads and nappies go for landfill, where it is estimated they will take up to 500 years to decompose. But waste management company PHS Group has come up with a cost-effective way of recycling these hygiene products on an industrial scale. The centre to handle the waste is based at Kelvin Way, in West Bromwich, to take advantage of the area's transport links.

Just four staff will be able to process up to 45,000 tonnes of waste a year when the plant hits full capacity.

Called LifeCycle, the process combines mechanical separation with chemical treatment and converts the highly absorbent hygiene products into Refused Derived Fuel (RDF), which is then supplied to the alternative energy market both in the UK and in Europe.

RDF is typically burned in biomass plants to produce electricity and hot water either for municipal power systems, the National Grid or individual companies.

Justin Tydeman, chief executive of PHS Group, said: "Hygiene products are an essential part of many of our everyday lives but disposing of them has always been an issue.

"For the first time, we can all enjoy the benefits that the products bring and know that they are disposed of in an environmentally responsible way."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Landmark series in the spotlight

THE BBC's wildlife series Planet Earth II is coming to the University of Birmingham, as part of the 2017 Royal Television Society Baird Lecture: The Making of a Natural History 'Blockbuster'.

In an illustrated talk held at the University Elgar Concert Hall, the BBC's creative director of factual and natural history, Mike Gunton, will take the audience on a ride through the trials, tribulations and approach taken to create the landmark series.

The Baird Lecture was held at the university once before, in 2006.

Brum team walk into sport semis

BIRMINGHAM Walking Football Club is in the semi-finals of the FA People's Cup. Two teams successfully made it through to the semi-finals after beating a host of other Midlands clubs, from Shrewsbury to Leicester.

Birmingham Walking Football Club were founded at Beechcroft Sports Club in Hall Green, and is one of the most popular sports held at the club.

They host 12 sessions a week to nearly 300 Walking Footballers. The FA People's Cup Semi-Finals are being held at Goals Birmingham Star City on Saturday.

Metallica's Brum date tickets due

METALLICA will play Birmingham as part of their WorldWired Tour in support of their new album. Hardwired . . . To Self-Destruct was released on November 18 selling more than 800,000 copies in its first week.

The four-piece will play the Genting Arena on October 30.

Tickets priced from £57.05 – which includes a copy of the new album – go on general sale from 9am tomorrow, Friday. Visit www.theticketfactory.com

Keisha hopes to be universally accepted

A BALLROOM dancer who splits her time between the UK and Denmark has been shortlisted for Miss Universe Great Britain.

Keisha Campion, entered for the national competition while staying in Birmingham on February 18. She then discovered that she had made the last 32 for the competition which will take place in Cardiff in July.

Keisha is no stranger to beauty pageants as she came runner-up in Miss Birmingham 2012 as a 16-year-old.

Fire in derelict office

SUSPECTED arsonists targeted a derelict office building in Sedgley, forcing the closure of a road.

West Midlands Fire Service was called to the former Dudley Council building in Bilston Street on Saturday, after 4pm. Large plumes of smoke were sent into the air.

IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews

What a fuss we all know we are the greater one

THERE has been a bit of a fuss about the Black Country being marketed as "Greater Birmingham" over at the annual regeneration jolly in the South of France.

While I normally recoil at any attempt to associate the Black Country with our noisy neighbours down the M6, on this occasion I think people are being a little bit harsh.

There's probably an innocent explanation. Indeed, I think it might be nothing more sinister than a simple typing error.

They meant to say Greater THAN Birmingham.

❒❒❒

IN September 2013, Nicola Sturgeon told Scottish people to seize the "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity" and vote for separation from the UK in the following year's referendum.

Now she is demanding another vote.

Look, I know life expectancy isn't what it should be north up there, but I think three-and-a-half years is pushing it a bit, don't you?

❒❒❒

TERRIBLE news from down-under. Apparently, unless a new deal can be struck with Channel 5, Neighbours could finally come to an end in the UK after 31 years. Now be honest, how many of you actually knew it was still going?

❒❒❒

IMAGINE for one moment you worked at the London Evening Standard. Not a pleasant thought, I admit, having to live down in the Big Black Smoke, but work with me on this one.

Having given your all for a few decades, you have worked your way up the ladder, and then the vacancy for the editor appears – and is given to somebody with next to no experience of the industry, has no formal journalistic qualifications, but who used to be Chancellor of the Exchequer. That will be good for morale.

Frankly, I couldn't care less how many jobs George Osborne has. Being a backbench MP should never be anything more than a part-time job, and paid accordingly. It is the rise of the full-time MP that has created a generation of meddling career politicians with no experience of life outside Westminster.

What is ridiculous though is the way somebody so demonstrably under-qualified can walk straight out of Downing Street into such a difficult and demanding role.

The suspicion is that he won't really be editor at all, simply using the paper as a political platform while other, better qualified people actually do the work.

Still, for politicians wanting to bring those pesky newspapers to heel, there are worse ways than getting a few of your own in to run them. I bet Leveson wished he had thought of that.

It's the wealthy who objected to Hammond NI rises

Philip Hammond – humiliating U-turn was 'necessary to maintain voters' trust'

Judge Lindsey Kushner – only saying what a normal, loving parent would say

Nigel Farage – a blistering feud with the party's only MP Douglas Carswell

White Van Man – I don't think so

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

WAS anyone convinced, on Budget day, that the raging fury over the Budget was the authentic voice of White Van Man, roused to rebellion at the prospect of higher National Insurance payments? No, me neither. It all happened far too quickly. MPs simply didn't have time to consult their white-van supporters, even assuming they know any. But then we shouldn't assume that all self-employed folk are horny-handed sons of toil, nor that Chancellor Philip Hammond's U-turn in scrapping the NI rises will be celebrated in back-street pubs with pints of mild and a bag of crisps for the whippet. The term "self-employed" covers some extremely wealthy, well-connected and influential types, such as barristers, Fleet Street columnists and broadcasters who did not take kindly to Hammond's rises. History will record that this was a rebellion among white collars, not white vans.

I BET we were all delighted to see the lorry owned by a pair of despicable fly-tippers in Hertfordshire being sent to the crusher. Pity the fly- tippers weren't inside.

WHAT is the point of the continued existence of UKIP, now that voters endorsed the concept of Brexit in the referendum last June? You might think they would quietly and happily disperse under the banner of 'mission accomplished'. But no. UKIP does not disperse and it certainly does not do anything quietly. At the moment, they are engaged in a bitter and savage civil war of self-destruction that makes the troubles in the Labour Party seem tame by comparison. UKIP's former leader Nigel Farage is having a blistering feud with the party's only MP, Popeye the Sailor Man lookalike Douglas Carswell, who is said to be inching back towards his former party the Tories again.

YOUR kids are going out into town for the night. You tell them to take care. Or at least you do if you are a normal, loving parent. And that's what Judge Lindsey Kushner was doing when she noted on her last day in court that women and girls who get blind drunk tend to be targeted by would-be rapists. If you believe all you see, the judge was widely condemned for 'victim-blaming'. But that's simply not true. I bet 90 per cent of the population thoroughly agree with her. What we saw in the media was a contrived and artificial controversy.

It was based on the views of a tiny number of campaigners and single-issue 'experts' who claim the judge's remarks may make women less likely to report rape. But Judge Kushner was desperately trying to prevent rapes happening in the first place, rather than picking up the pieces afterwards.

DOG walkers in wooded areas should stop using poo bags and adopt a "stick and flick" method, according to the Forestry Commission which has produced a poem to make the point: "If your dog should do a plop, take a while and make a stop / Just find a stick and flick it wide into the undergrowth at the side." I find myself also moved to verse, to point out the possible hazards of the new method: "Make sure that you've got lots of space / 'Cos stick-flicked **** goes all over the place."

PITY we didn't have a public naming competition for the Royal Navy's latest aircraft carrier which, as reported a few days ago, is overdue, over budget, understaffed and still waiting for its warplanes. HMS Whiteelephant McWhiteelephantface?

APPARENTLY we should all be more worried about nitrogen pollution than global warming. Yes, I know it's going to be hard after 20 years spent fretting about greenhouse gases but you don't want to be left behind in the anxiety stakes, do you? A charity called Plantlife claims air pollution caused by agriculture and engines is over-enriching our soil and encouraging the growth of "thuggish" plants such as nettles. Sorry to spoil the angst party but nettles are wonderful things. They are one of the most useful plants on the planet, rich in iron and vitamin C. You can eat them in salads, turn them into soup, brew them as tea or even turn them into nettle-yarn fabric. You could argue that an excess of nitrogen is giving us great bounty of a miracle crop. But that would be good news, and who wants that?

THE Scots were assured by their political leaders that the 2014 vote on independence from the UK would be a "once in a generation" referendum. They are now being told to expect another one in a year or so. This one will also be a "once in a generation" referendum – unless they vote the wrong way again.

HALF-watching the telly, I caught the Prime Minister telling the Commons about a "cattery trade delegation." I was heartened to think someone as busy as Mrs May could find time to chat with people providing holiday accommodation for cats. The delegation turned out to be Qatari.

MORE issues with the new £5 note. A reader writes: "Is it just me or does the new five-pound note have a life of its own?" He reports a problem with "escaping" fivers creeping out of his shirt pocket and wonders whether some curious reaction is going on between the polymers in the note and the polymers in the shirt material. Fascinating.

TALKING POINT

Attention! That's my Mother's Day wish

THERE is good news and bad news for my children as Mother's Day looms.

I do not want them to splash out on a bunch of flowers that will be considerably more expensive in the days before Mothering Sunday than at any other time of year with the exception, possibly, of Valentine's Day.

I do not want a novelty, twee gift such as a plaque or a vase with some motivational poem/message/logo on and I don't expect a huge and/or expensive card.

And I most certainly do not want to be wined and dined in an over-booked pub or restaurant. Inevitably tables are crammed together while the mass of increasingly bored children try to run around in the few gaps, adding to the wall of noise and the irritation that is already rising from the predictable wait as hordes of diners descend.

So that's the good news for my children. I am, if nothing else, a cheap date.

However, the bad news, they may think, is that I have to have their full, undivided attention for the day.

Despite the nauseating sentimentality and commercial hype today, Mother's Day was first celebrated in the UK in the 17th century which is long before America adopted it.

It began as Mothering Sunday and at a time when children were often sent away to work as servants or apprentices. It was considered important that children were allowed to visit their homes once a year. The time decided for the visit to home was the middle Sunday of the fasting period of Lent.

In these modern times, I consider myself lucky if I can pin my two teenagers down for one day a year – certainly when they are not busy staring at their hands – or rather the phones permanently in them!

Mother's Day, like Halloween or Valentine's Day, or even Christmas, is in danger of being swallowed up by the commercial opportunists. It has already been hyped up to such an extent that we just see it as another expense and more pressure to impress. Mother's Day doesn't even have the bonus of being a bank holiday.

Well I reject the hype – though that doesn't let my children totally off the hook.

On MY Mothering Sunday I want quality time with my children, I don't want to have to cook the dinner and I'd quite like the odd cuppa made for me too. I'd like to spend time chatting, maybe watch a film or take a walk, but most of all I want a relaxed day when none of us are rushing off or tied up.

Of course, Lent quickly leads into Easter and my children don't mind the hype if it means a great big calorific chocolate egg for them. So they might want to remember who gets that egg when planning my Mother's Day this year!

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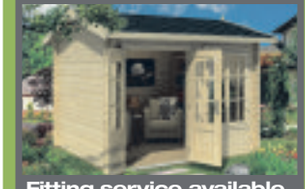
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Care in community never materialised

IT is 46 years this year since I became a nurse. When I started nursing it was in a large hospital for those with learning disabilities in 1971. Even then we were told changes were in the system and 'care in the community' was the best way.

However the hospitals closed but the care in the community never materialised – in fact if you look back 40 years at the numbers of district nurses, midwives, etc, there were in the 80s you cannot fail to see the difference. The patients that were thrown out of hospitals these days often living on street corners, the same has happened to the elderly.

At one time almost every corner had some form of home for the elderly and our large hospitals had geriatric wings to help if the elderly needed help at home there were district nurses.

The Government is cutting back on care in the community whilst increasing the demand for it – the mentally ill elderly and those with learning disabilities are desperate for care yet the Government is cutting spending. Back in the 80s we were building more hospitals and training more nurses, the NHS is the worst I have known. There are more people in this country than ever – the birth rate is at its highest for 50 years, you cannot blame all the problems of the NHS on an ageing population.

We have to urgently employ and train more nurses to replace ones that are leaving and spend more on hospitals – a lot could be raised simply by raising NHS contributions. The French pay a bigger stamp but have a much better system.

HELENA CAMWELL
Tividale

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST
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EMAIL
sandwell.chronicle@expressandstar.co.uk

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Success on search for shipmates

LOCAL newspapers around the country, like this one, recently printed a letter of mine about those who have served in the Royal Navy trying to find their old shipmates.

The response has been fantastic.

There are now over 40 Royal Navy reunion weekends organised around the country. For those who are seeking the camaraderie of the past, the reunions are listed on the RN Shipmates website, www.rnshipmates.co.uk and if your readers want to get in touch and start a search, the contact is there.

For those not on email drop a line to Mike Crowe, 7 Heath Road, Sandown, Isle of Wight, PO36 8PG. and I will send you a list and all details. A stamp will help the pension! (Please leave the stamp on its own backing paper.)

See you there, and thank you local newspapers.

MIKE CROWE
Isle of Wight

State of centre is a complete disgrace

WHEN is Dudley Council going to sort out Dudley Town Centre? It is after all the capital of one of the main centres of the Black Country.

The whole place is a complete disgrace there are more empty shops than businesses and you can't walk more than a couple of yards without being accosted by a beggar. The once thriving Churchill Precinct now has only about four shops and if things go on as they are perhaps they will go too soon.

The council spent millions on the market but now most of it sits empty most of the time except for a few loyal fruit stalls. Even the lovely cake shop on the corner seems to have gone - probably after a vandal smashed her window and cost her £4,000.

HELENA CAMWELL
Tividale

Players had grasp of reality

IN 1966 Bobby Charlton earned £15,000 per year. He got an extra £1,000 for winning the World Cup; what a far cry from today's primadonnas.

In 1966 the likes of Charlton and Bobby Moore were consummate professionals who offered little scandal. So am I wrong to adhere those values to the last time England as a footballing nation was successful?

Since Jimmy Hill got rid of the players wage cap we have seen a steady stream of egos arise claiming they are the best and yet England have won nothing. In the Premiership we constantly hear of players falling foul of the law, rapists, thieves, drug dealers and drink drivers are commonplace within the modern game.

The sheer amount of money has removed core principles and honour and for a better word 'greed' is captain of most Premiership teams.

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Search is on for most wanted suspects in the Black Country

Niron Parker-Lee

Daniel Glowacki

Damian Hill

Derick Copeland

Johnny Connors

MURDER, robbery and burglary – these are just some of the crimes that the Black Country's most wanted are being hunted down for by West Midlands Police.

A gallery of the region's most wanted suspected criminals displays those suspected of many serious offences, but who are yet to be caught.

Detectives continue to search for a key suspect wanted in connection with the murder of 24-year-old Mansoor Mahmood, who was stabbed to death in Brierley Hill's High Street back in October.

He is 19-year-old Niron Parker-Lee from the Brierley Hill area of Dudley.

Report by Judith Hawkins

A murder inquiry was launched after Mr Mahmood was found on the High Street at around 4.45pm on Saturday, October 15 and later died in hospital.

DI Harry Harrison, from homicide, said: "It's important we locate Niron Parker-Lee as soon as possible and I would urge anyone with information about his whereabouts to contact us.

"Someone knows where this man is and I'd remind them that harbouring a wanted man is a criminal offence and you may also face prosecution."

Parker-Lee is described as dangerous. He should not be approached by members of the public. Any sightings of him should be reported to police immediately on 999.

Police also continue to hunt for 34-year-old Damian Hill, wanted in connection to a robbery at Costcutters on Wynall Lane, Wollescote on December 20 at about 10.10pm.

Hill is described as white, medium build and 5ft 9ins tall. He has green eyes, short brown hair and has a Midlands accent.

He has pierced ears, and a number of tattoos including '666' on his neck 'Kylan 7/7/07' above a bulldog on his right arm and 'Kerrie' on right wrist.

He has connections to Stourbridge, Brierley Hill, Cradley, Halesowen, Oldbury and Handsworth. A number of attempts have been made to locate Hill, but officers are asking the public's help to find him.

If you have any information call 101.

Also wanted for questioning is Derick Copeland following a burglary at Goldthorn Park in Wolverhampton last November. Copeland, aged 55, has links to Coalpool, Walsall, Perry Barr, Handsworth and Wolverhampton. He is described as a black and 5ft 9ins tall.

A number of attempts have been made to locate Copeland, but police want the public's help.

Police are looking to find a man in connection with a number of thefts from elderly women on bus journeys.

Daniel Glowacki, aged 35, is wanted by both West Midlands Police and London's Metropolitan Police in connection with several thefts from elderly women's bags on bus journeys.

It concerns around 20 alleged offences across Sandwell, Dudley and London over a long period of time. National Express West Midlands is offering a reward for anyone with information.

Tony Dallison, head of security at the bus company, said: "These thefts target elderly women using the bus and we are determined to put a stop to it. So we are offering a substantial amount to anyone who gives us information that leads to a conviction for these particularly despicable crimes."

A man wanted in connection with a distraction burglary in Wolverhampton is still being sought after another man's arrest.

Anyone with information about the whereabouts of Johnny Connors, 20, is urged to come forward.

If you can help police with their searches, call 101 or the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.

Pilot scheme under way to help families

PARENTS are finding new friends as part of a pilot scheme to bring mothers, fathers and carers together.

Through a series of regular coffee mornings, dozens of parents in Tipton are able to make the most of all the information on offer about children's development and family support.

Tipton Community Operating Group is leading the project with support from a range of partners, with the project running from Tipton Christian Church.

The Sandwell Local Tipton team, Black Country Women's Aid, Jobcentre Plus, Tipton Children's Centre and the council's children's services are all supporting the project.

Councillor Simon Hackett, Sandwell Council's cabinet member for children's services, who met parents at a recent meeting, said: "It has been great to see so many families come along to these sessions."

At the most recent meeting, Tipton neighbourhood police and Sandwell Council's anti-social behaviour team met parents to discuss the work they do and gave advice on a variety of topics. And in April, the coffee morning will focus on budget and debt management.

To find out more, contact Tipton COG on 0121 569 7291.

Redrow donations to hospital nears £45k

MIDLANDS staff of house builder Redrow Homes have taken the total they have raised for Birmingham Children's Hospital over the last three years to almost £45,000.

The latest instalment of £6,250 brings the total donated by Redrow's Tamworth-headquartered Midlands business to £44,907.25.

Redrow, which has its head office in Flintshire, was founded in 1974 by former Wolves owner Steve Morgan.

Vandal smashed glass as terrified family watched

A MAN smashed the living room windows of a house with a crowbar while a mother and her four children were terrified inside, a court heard.

Tyrone Sadler, from Smethwick, launched the random attack on the house in Carisbrooke Road, Wednesbury, at around 9.30pm on January 14, a court was told.

The 25-year-old pleaded not guilty to the charge of destroying and damaging property along with three other similar changes that were dismissed during the one day trial at Dudley Magistrates.

The court heard how victim Angela Ledbury was sitting in her living room when Sadler appeared at the window and started to 'smash each pane of glass'.

Giving evidence, she said: "I heard a bang and walked to the window and saw a shadow and could see Tyrone Sadler the other side of the window. He started with the pane nearest to the window and then moved across with a crowbar. My daughter was screaming.

Scared

"I was panicking and shouted to my daughter to stay upstairs and I ran and put the latch on the front door. He then began to smash the glass in the front door and it flew over me and hit the mirror taking chips out of it. We have been left feeling incredibly scared and upset following this."

The court heard how Ms Ledbury had recognised Sadler from seeing him while out shopping and in newspaper coverage.

Sadler was found guilty of the offence and given a 12 month community order, a criminal behaviour order not to enter the Friar Park area and a restraining order against the victim. He was also ordered to pay court costs and compensation totalling an excess of £400. It comes just months after Sadler was cleared of killing 15-year-old Adam Jones in West Bromwich who was knocked down by a car.

Naomi shows her wild side

BBC children's TV presenter Naomi Wilkinson, who will be at Birmingham Town Hall with her stage show next month

CHILDREN'S TV presenter Naomi Wilkinson is bringing her Wild & Scary show to Birmingham Town Hall next month.

As part of the former Channel 5 Milkshake host's national tour, the family-friendly show will be packed full of fun and surprises.

Naomi will be recalling some of her most exciting and adrenaline-boosting wildlife experiences from the far flung corners of the world, and will even introduce the audience to some fierce and frightening animals she has met along the way. She will be joined on stage by 'Animal Mark' (Mark Amey), who is a regular favourite on TV shows and he will have with him some of his scariest creatures.

Naomi is the presenter of CBBC's Naomi's Nightmares of Nature, in which she travels the world to come face-to- face with animals that initially seem weird, dangerous or downright scary.

Naomi is also a regular presenter for BBC1's CountryfileIdeal for families with children aged 5 years or older, tickets are on sale at goo.gl/nqnPGq or via the Town Hall website.

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Expansion of Smethwick school nears final phase

PLANS are in place to complete the final phase of a project to improve a school as part of the £6.6m primary school investment in Sandwell for hundreds of school places.

Sandwell Council rebuilt Crocketts Community Primary School on its new site in 2009 on Coopers Lane in Smethwick. The rebuild, costing just over £8 million, was initiated to replace the out-dated building located round the corner.

Since then, the school has been extended to cater for an increased intake from 30 to 60 children each year to keep up with the demand.

The school investment across the borough was backed by the council's cabinet to meet the increasing demand on schools in the borough. Council leaders said it was in response to 'an unprecedented growth in birth rate over recent years'.

But now the final phase of the expansion project at Crocketts Community Primary School is now in full swing with plans to build a further classroom to cater for some extra pupils who joined the school last year.

Welcomed

Children's services chief Councillor Simon Hackett said: "This 'Outstanding' school is doing a great job with children and families in the area so I know the extra room will be welcomed to help them continue with this."

Building of the new classroom will start over the coming months is planned to be ready for staff and children to move into by September 2018.

Other plans including a new free school called Shireland High Tech Primary were approved in February and is set to create 420 places. Projects to refurbish Reddal Hill Primary School, in Cradley Heath, and Summerhill Primary School in Tipton, would also be completed under the new plans. Meanwhile, St Gregory's Catholic primary school and Lyng Primary School will also have classroom extensions.

Council gets to the core of fruity scheme

WORK has started to create a community orchard at a Smethwick allotment site.

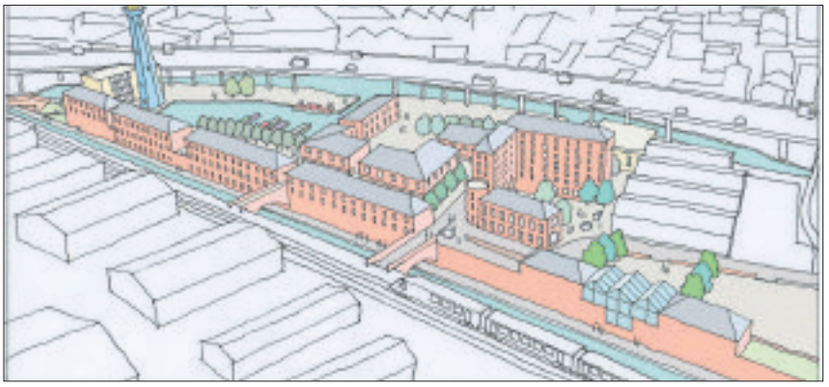
The project – called Common Ground: Sandwell – will provide a centre for people and children to learn orchard skills at the Londonderry Lane allotment site.

Members of the council's environmental services team have offered a helping hand with some major preparatory work, clearing some of the dense bushes and overgrowth on land earmarked for the orchard.

Councillor Richard Marshall, cabinet member for leisure, said: "I'm glad that our environmental services team have been able to help out with some initial work to prepare the site.

"I'd like to wish the project every success and would encourage anyone who has some spare time and wants to get some exercise and fresh air to think about volunteering, meeting up with neighbours and perhaps making some new friends."

Council's Chance to show scheme



An artist's impression of the £25 million transformation of the historic former glass works factory

SANDWELL Council will play host to Chance Glass Works Heritage Trust and the launch of their new short film.

The event to celebrate the start of the £25 million transformation of a historic former glass works factory takes place on Wednesday 29 March at 11am in the council chambers at Sandwell Council House.

The film will be shown after an introduction from Councillor Steve Eling, leader of Sandwell Council.

He said: "Chances Glass Works is of real significance to the heritage of the area and I am fully supportive of restoring this historic site. I urge people to come along to the event to see these plans for themselves."

Chance Glass Works in Palace Drive Spon Lane Smethwick is a Scheduled Monument on Historic England's 'At Risk' Register. It is a 9-acre site consisting of 7 Grade 2 Listed Buildings and a series of underground Grade 2 Listed tunnels.

Mark Davies, Chair of the Chance Glass Works Heritage Trust is also encouraging people to come to the event. He said: "This is the start of a really exciting project that will help to regenerate and re-energise the area, creating hundreds of jobs and training opportunities for local people."

During the event there will also be an interactive workshop where members of the public can give their views on the project and help shape what the site will look like. Tickets for the event are free and can be booked online: www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/chance-glass-works-heritage-trust-cgwht-film-launch-tickets-32407336215

Memorial to terror attack victims due

A MEMORIAL to the victims of the Tunisia terror attacks – including three members of the same Black Country family – will be constructed in a West Midlands park.

Cannon Hill Park in Birmingham has been chosen as the location for the monument which will pay tribute to those killed in Sousse and Tunis in 2015. The place of 'remembrance, commemoration and reflection' is due to open next year.

Joel Richards, 19, his uncle Adrian Evans, 44, and grandfather Pat Evans, 78, were among those who lost their lives during terrorist Seifeddine Rezgui's rampage at the Riu Imperial Marhaba hotel in Sousse on June 26, 2015.

Joel's younger brother Owen, just 16 at the time, survived the attack.

Others killed included former Birmingham City FC player Dennis Thwaites, 70, and his wife Elaine, 69, and Sue Davey, 44, who grew up in West Bromwich.

The attack followed a previous assault on Bardo National Museum in the capital city of Tunis on March 18, 2015, which claimed the life of Sally Adey from Shifnal.

Chiefs said Cannon Hill Park, which is opposite Edgbaston Cricket Ground, was chosen because of its central location, seclusion and tranquillity.

Apartments on way at chapel building

A FORMER chapel in Netherton will be turned into an apartment block, under new plans.

Built in 1810, the Old Chapel, in St Giles Street, was used by Champions Church until 2010 when it moved to a new building in Cinder Bank.

Now, after selling at auction last year for £132,000, a planning application has been submitted for nine apartments in the church building, three one-beds, six two-beds.

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Breeders get their goat in farm bid

A Bagot goat – part of a Sandwell Valley breeding project

FARMERS at Sandwell Valley are working on a special breeding programme to increase a stock of very rare goats on the fields in West Bromwich – and to preserve the breed forever. The attractive black-and-white Bagot goats are part of a special conservation effort to increase their numbers, because there are now fewer than 200 registered breeding females left.

The council is helping with the scheme to breed the goats naturally and by artificial insemination methods in a project run by the Rare Breeds Survival Trust (RBST).

Melissa Underwood-Grattage, working farm manager at Sandwell Valley, said the Bagot goats are owned by the RBST and in the care of Sandwell staff to care for as an approved farm park. She said: "We have successfully managed to harvest four grade A embryos from four of our nanny goats. These have been frozen and put into the RBST's gene bank and we are pleased with the result because this was the first time that this has ever been tried with primitive goats."

Farmers at Forge Mill Farm in the Valley helped with the work during a month-long fertility programme.

Melissa added: "In theory, by storing frozen embryos we have helped to preserve the breed forever.

"We have also successfully bred the other four nanny goats and the first of them gave birth on 28 February. The offspring from these goats will form part of our breeding stock here at the country park in years to come."

Police chase teen ended up in canal

A TEENAGER led police on a high speed chase, driving on the wrong side of the road, rushing through red lights and forcing pedestrians to jump out of the way.

However, 19-year-old Myles Harris was given a suspended sentence because it was his first offence.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard and saw CCTV of how Harris was chased by police through Smethwick and en route to Birmingham, before finally being caught in the canal.

By Judith Hawkins

The pursuit started at 8.45pm on December 1 at Grove Lane in Smethwick, when police spotted a Fiat Punto which they initially suspected was stolen.

According to Harris, of Camborne Close, Aston, he had instead borrowed it from a friend, despite having no insurance, in order to attend a football match.

He was sentenced last Tuesday after previously pleading guilty to dangerous driving and for driving without insurance.

Prosecuting, Mr David Bennett, said: "The police activated their flashing lights and sirens, but the defendant failed to stop."

Mr Bennett described the lengthy chase, at one point was doing 70mph in a 30mph zone along Booth Street. When the car reached Dudley Road, Mr Bennett said: "He forced pedestrians who were crossing the road to jump out of the way."

It wasn't until Harris and the pursuing officers reached Sheepcote Street in Birmingham, more than two miles away, that police were able to block him in. He then appeared to fall or jump into the canal, and officers went in to bring him back on to land and arrest him.

Defending, Mr Simon Burch, said: "It the mindless stupidity of a teenager." He told the court that his client had recently secured a job at a factory in West Bromwich.

Harris received a nine month prison sentence suspended for 18 months, and must complete 120 hours of unpaid work. He is also disqualified from driving for at least 18 months, but must retake a driving test.

Although he received no separate penalty for having no insurance, his licence will also be endorsed, and he must pay £500 contribution to court costs.

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Fuzz hopes for Minor success with car work

AN Oldbury-based suppliers of spare parts for modern and classic cars has embarked on an exciting new restoration project with the help of a TV presenter.

David Manners Group (DMG), based in Wolverhampton Road, supplies parts for classics from Jaguar, to Daimler, MG, Triumph, Mini and Morris Minors.

They have enlisted the help of National Geographic and Channel 4's Car SOS Presenter Fuzz Townshend.

After months of searching for the right car to work on, DMG have found a Morris Minor perfect for the occasion – previously owned by an incredibly generous gentleman who requested that instead of payment for the car, DMG make a donation to Birmingham Children's Hospital.

DMG have since donated £1500 on his behalf. The car is named after his late wife, Glenys.

The project is being sponsored by Lucas who will be supplying some of the parts, while the rest will be provided by the Morris Minor Centre Birmingham, part of the group.

The work is being carried out at Classic Friendly garage To-Ta Classics, dedicated to looking after classic cars just like this one.

Fuzz said: "It's a great way to get the younger generation excited about the world of classic cars, and I can't wait to get started."

Determined to prove that the Morris Minor is a viable car for anyone to run, DMG will be documenting the restoration every step of the way on YouTube with hints and tips to help budding enthusiasts start work on their own cars.

When work on the car is finished, DMG plan to raffle it off with all the proceeds going to the Primrose Hospice in Bromsgrove.

Siobhan Turner, Alice Marlow and Fuzz Townshend with the Morris Minor

Street wise scheme on list

A WALKING and cycling initiative that is getting people moving has been shortlist for an award.

Beat the Street – which is taking place across Sandwell – has been recognised for its success at encouraging people to get active after being shortlisted for Participation Event of the Year at the BT Sport Industry Awards 2017. The awards are one of the most prestigious commercial sports awards in Europe.

Beat the Street is a unique walking and cycling initiative which gets entire communities moving by transforming towns and cities into giant games.

The game currently taking place in Sandwell has seen more than 10,000 residents run, walk and cycle 24,000 miles in less than three weeks.

A spokesman, said "We are delighted to see Beat the Street shortlisted alongside such nationally recognisable and successful events and initiatives."

The winner will be announced on April 27.

Sandwell age UK

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A painting of the abandoned station by Ken Millard

The Goods Depot empty and forlorn in 2013

The Mayor and Curator Alec Brew at the opening

An ambulance train at Tettenhall after D-Day

Chance to track city's rich transport heritage

MEMORY LANE

By Alec Brew

ON Saturday, March 11 the Mayor of Wolverhampton Barry Findlay formally opened the Tettenhall Transport Heritage Centre, in the former GWR Goods Depot at Tettenhall Station.

And another new use had been found for a fine old building.

When the railway through Tettenhall started, in 1913, the station was to be built in a meadow, the field after which the adjacent Meadow View Terrace was named.

The station was actually built within the boundaries of Tettenhall Urban District Council, though the line criss-crossed Smestow Brook which was the boundary with Wolverhampton.

Construction was halted by the First World War and the line did not open until 1925.

Passenger services only ran for seven years, though special trains often loaded with passengers at Tettenhall for day trips to the seaside. The line became used mostly for coal and goods trains, serving as a by-pass to the Black Country.

Evacuated

When the Royal Show was held at Wrottesley Park in 1935, everything was delivered by train to Tettenhall, including hundreds of farm animals.

In the war children, evacuated from bigger cities, were taken to Tettenhall, and after D-Day casualty trains unloaded wounded soldiers to be taken to local hospitals.

The line closed in 1965 and, after the rails were taken up, became the Smestow Valley linear park, with people able to walk and cycle to Wombourne and beyond.

The Park Rangers used the station buildings, and the Goods Depot was used for storage. The station building was refurbished, and the car park built with EU money.

Recently the Rangers moved out and Cupcake Lane Cafe opened in the station. The Goods Depot was taken over in 2014 by a volunteer-run charity and turned into the city's first transport museum, open every weekend free of charge.

Now that it has been re-roofed, thanks to a large grant from the Ibstock-Cory Environmental Trust, the centre can welcome visitors to learn Wolverhampton's rich transport heritage.

Tettenhall Station in 1926, including footbridge

The Tettenhall Transport Heritage Centre

Smestow Brook when the station was built (right)

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Saintly goings-on to celebrate day

The mayor of Sandwell Julie Webb and John Spellar MP help out at the Kenrick Park community centre St Patrick's Day celebrations, with back, from left, Pat Cox, Angela Coughlan, Maurice Long, Tony Flanagan and Oran Grigg

ONE day just wasn't long enough to celebrate the biggest day of the year for Irish communities – so the people of Sandwell turned St Patrick's Day into a week-long party.

The celebrations took place at Kenrick Park Community Centre in Glover Street, West Bromwich, home of the Sandwell Irish Society for the last three years.

Last Thursday the borough's mayor Councillor Julie Webb was guest of honour, along with Warley MP John Spellar, Labour's former Northern Ireland minister, and Seadhna MacHugh, political affairs officer at the Irish Embassy in London, representing the Irish ambassador Daniel Mulhall. The guests were piped into the centre by members of Birmingham Irish Pipes and Drums.

Pupils from nearby St John Bosco Catholic Primary School recited two poems in Irish.

Siobhan Gorman, manager at the Sandwell Irish Society, said: "It's been a really wonderful week, with different things going on every day."

Popular Irish musicians Aidan O'Brien and Pat Brennan provided the musical entertainment while Len Cale, who heads the Birmingham St Patrick's Day dressed in the green and gold robes of the patron saint of Ireland himself.

Consultant getting to the heart of problems

IT'S one of the top killers in the West Midlands but medic Anthony D'Sa hopes his work will help drastically reduce the number of people suffering from the effects of heart disease.

The consultant radiologist, who works for Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust, is responsible for running one of the leading Cardiac CT Services in the country, which has already made a tremendous difference to the imaging department.

Anthony works alongside consultant cardiologist Dr Derek Connolly, to carrying out 1,200 Cardiac CT scans every year using a state-of-the-art machine.

He said: "Cardiac CTs have been performed at the Trust for five years now and I am honoured to be part of the service.

"It is specialised and involves a cardiologist and radiologist working together to assess coronary artery disease.

Appropriate

"The scanner produces detailed pictures of the heart which means we are able to diagnose a variety of heart conditions.

"We are often able to tell the patient the result of the scan immediately, which enables us to commence appropriate treatment straight away."

"My interest in imaging came after working in a radiology department whilst I was a medical student.

"From there I decided I wanted to become a radiologist. It's a fascinating field and I'm happy I chose it."

Anthony explained why he decided to take a job in the West Midlands after working in London: "I grew up in Birmingham and it's a fantastic place to live and work. I know that heart disease is prevalent in the area and I wanted to help change that."

So what drives him at work?

"I like to think that I make a difference to patients," he added.

"When I am able to diagnose an unusual case, which helps reveal a complicated condition at an early stage, I think that's very rewarding.

"This is particularly true for the work that we are doing with the Cardiac CT scans. Many other heart tests just assess the heart, but this test can assess the bones, lungs and blood vessels as well."

Anthony has set himself the challenge to make the Trust's Cardiac CT services one of the best in the country.

He said: "I would like to see the service expand so we can serve more people who need this test."

A family man, Anthony enjoys spending time with his wife and two children. He particularly enjoys travelling and hopes to visit South America one day.

He said: "I have been fortunate enough to travel and experience different cultures in my life to date and really enjoyed the experience of visiting Nepal where although there is so little to live on, nevertheless the people always seem happy – that really impresses me."

Anthony's very own hero is the late world famous boxer Mohammed Ali.

He explained: "Mohammed Ali stood up for his rights in his own unique way, and this is one of the many reasons I find him inspirational, that and the fact I love boxing and he was the greatest!"

NHS HEROES

ONCE again we focus some of our time on the quiet heroes of the NHS, from a wide variety of backgrounds doing a wide variety of jobs.

Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust is one of the Black Country's largest NHS organisations.

It employs 7,500 people, many of whom live locally.

Last year, the trust provides care from 150 locations.

This week we highlight: ANTHONY D'SA Consultant radiologist

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Holly Lodge
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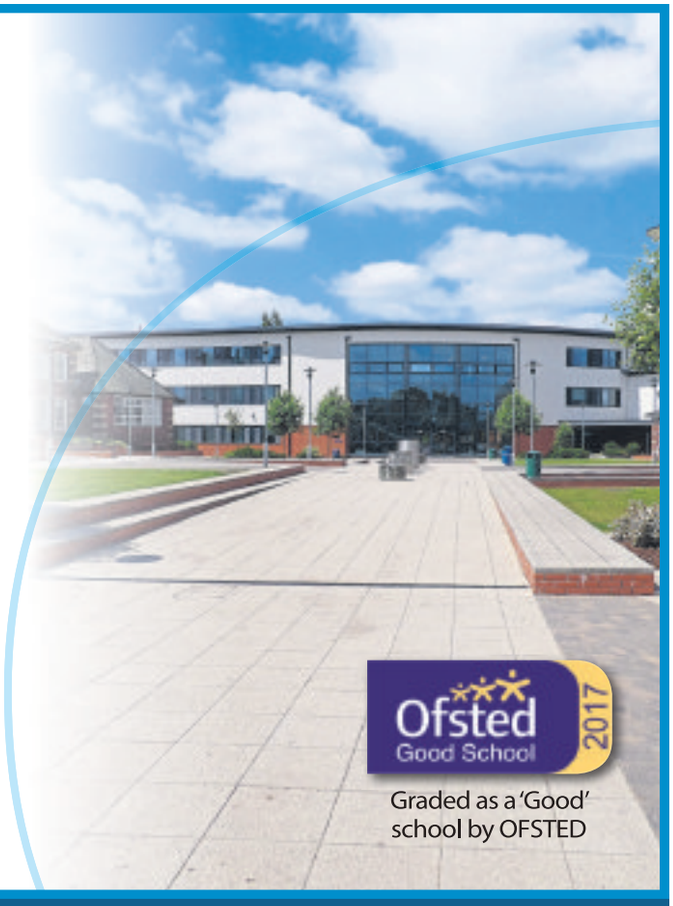
Success for All

Holly Lodge is celebrating their latest Ofsted inspection result. The inspection report is full of really positive statements that are such a true reflection of the daily routines and progress made by students at the school. Inspectors found that "This school continues to be good" the school has a real momentum and has continued to maintain a standard it can be pleased with.
Holly Lodge continues to be a school of parental choice and has grown significantly since the last inspection in 2013 to over 1450 students.
The report from the inspection highlights
"leadership team are fully committed to creating a culture of continuous school improvement"
Students are "well behaved", "engaged enthusiastically with their learning" and "polite and courteous to each other around the school site"
As Headteacher I have to confess to being so proud of my staff and students. The school has outstanding and committed staff who continually work to challenge and develop students through their teaching and support. With such a resource we are able to boast about the level of progress our students make
"Pupils made significantly better progress than others nationally in languages and humanities"
Parents are supportive and can rest assured that their children are in an environment in which
"Leaders, including governors, take their responsibilities for safeguarding very seriously." And one in which "The curriculum includes numerous opportunities to improve pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe."
What is more this success stretches through to a growing Sixth form which has seen records for performance beaten each year so far. Holly Lodge is a school proud of what it provides to its community and will continue to strive to live up to its core belief in 'Success for All'.
"The school has welcomed a considerable number of pupils who are newly arrived in the UK and are providing good support to help them develop English language skills and an understanding of British values"
A full report from the Ofsted inspection that took place on 14th February 2017 can be found on the school's and Ofsted website.

Mr Paul Shone
Headteacher
Holly Lodge School
16/3/2017



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Final phase of improvements for school due

Councillor Simon Hackett and Crocketts Community Primary School head Lynne Paino with year 4 children Elijah, Simran, Radhika, Oliver and Danyal

PLANS are in place to complete the final phase of a project to improve Crocketts Community Primary School in Smethwick.

Sandwell Council rebuilt the state-of-the-art primary school on its new site in 2009 in Coopers Lane, Smethwick. The rebuild costing just over £8million was initiated to replace the out-dated building located round the corner on Crocketts Lane.

Since then the school, rated as 'Outstanding' by Ofsted, has been extended to cater for an increased intake from 30 to 60 children each year to keep up with the demand in school.

The final phase of the project is now in full swing with plans to build a further classroom to cater for some extra pupils who joined the school last year.

Councillor Simon Hackett, cabinet member for children's services said: "This project is part of our continued commitment to ensure all children in Sandwell get one of their preferred choices when applying for a school place.

"This 'Outstanding' school is doing a great job with children and families in the area so I know the extra room will be welcomed to help them continue with this."

Building of the new classroom will start over the coming months its planned to be ready for staff and children to move into by September 2018.

FOCUS ON SMETHWICK

Legal travellers camp could be built as part of crackdown

A HOLDING park for travellers is set to be built in Sandwell in a bid to tackle illegal camps that have plagued the borough.

Visitors using the 'temporary transit site' earmarked for derelict land opposite Black Patch Park in Smethwick would be charged £80 per caravan for a short stay, plus a £250 deposit for each group.

Police would be given new powers to move travellers onto the site in a given time frame from unauthorised camps. Those who refuse to move to the transit site could be banned from the borough for three months.

By Jamie Brassington

It would be the latest initiative launched to tackle travellers in the borough after new powers were given in January to evict them from council-run land in 24 hours. The proposed move has been welcomed by police and council bosses. The plans were due to be put forward to council bosses at the authority's next cabinet meeting on March 22.

Councillor Paul Moore, cabinet member for regeneration, said: "By creating a transit site, the police can unlock additional legal powers to order an unauthorised encampment to relocate to the transit site. Our hope is that this would significantly reduce the amount of money the council spends on cleaning up after unauthorised encampments."We would be the only area in the West Midlands to be using these special police powers by providing a transit site."

The site has been earmarked for Boulton Road. Black Patch Park, which is opposite, saw around 50 tonnes of illegal rubbish dumped by travellers in February, costing taxpayers £5,500 to clean up.

Council bosses previously said they were also looking at transit sites in Oldbury and Tipton. The council has spent more than £250,000 dealing with illegal camps since April 2016. The money has gone on clean-ups, site security, bailiffs and court costs.

Residents living in Smethwick have expressed concern at the move.

Rob Wilkes, from Perrott Street, said: "It's not something I would want to see if I looked out my window."

The rare photograph taken at Chance Glassworks in Smethwick around 100 years ago

Firm lens a hand to view historic past

IT LOOKS like you are staring through a time portal into a world of yesteryear when the Black Country was the beating heart of industrial Britain.

This extremely rare black-and-white photograph is thought to have been taken on the yard of the historic Chance Glassworks in Smethwick, 100 years ago. And what makes the photograph even more special is the illusion created, as the image – which is reflected off a lighthouse lens – is actually upside down.

The image has been shared by Mike Fenton, aged 55 and from Oldbury, who is a member of a campaign aiming to save and restore the historic site, which dates back to 1824. It is actually a photograph of a photograph. Mike took the shot at a fair held in Malvern. He said: "The set-up of the photograph seems to fit with other photographs and information I have seen about the works from that era."

The glassworks site, at Spon Lane near the M5, is now largely derelict, but is subject to an ambitious £25 million masterplan.

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Super sale before makeover

Interiors Italia, the trend-bucking interior superstore, has propped up the corner of Darlington Street and Waterloo Road for nearly a decade.

To get it ready for the next 10 years, the store is getting ready for a makeover, but before they can start... everything must go.

"I can't wait to get started," said Store Manager Roberta Colavito, "But before we can begin, we need to sell everything. We're having a huge sale and at these prices I hope people don't camp outside the shop. We're closing for two weeks to give the entire store a monumental makeover."

The doors will close at 6pm on Tuesday. April 18 to allow the store to complete its refurbishment. The new look store will open at 10.30am on Friday, April 28, when customers can catch the first glimpse of the revamped showroom.

Wealth of delights to give a new look to your home

The shop front of Interiors Italia, in Darlington Street, Wolverhampton

Promotions

Until then, the customer service desk will keep normal shop hours and the helpful staff can tell you all about the updated store. As the launch draws closer they'll also be on hand to explain the offers and promotions to mark the relaunch.

For 10 years the 'Italian furniture shop', has forged its place in the heart of Wolverhampton's city centre. Roberta believes the store has held its ground against disruption in the retail market for many reasons.

"Perhaps we've held on so well because of the store's renowned style and its unique range, or because it has such a loyal customer base.

Over the last 10 years British retail has changed a lot. You can see this by the number of shops that are closing on the high street. Nowadays customers can buy anything they want without leaving their home. We have pieces to suit every style and budget and our customers love to discover and get inspiration when they visit the store.

Here, they can also feel and interact with the products and that isn't possible when you're shopping online."

The new look store will introduce a large selection of beautiful oak furniture and on the first floor customers will discover one of the largest independent bed centres in Wolverhampton. The refurbishment will also mean improved elevator access.

The improved lifts will enable shoppers to enjoy all three floors without the need to have a sit down half way, unless of course they fancy trying out one of the new designer Italian sofas.

From now until the launch, the business will be recruiting new staff to help in the refurbished store. Applicants can register their interest here at http://www.italianfurnitureshop.co.uk

> ***"It is our goal to provide our customers with the best possible furniture shopping experience"***

"We are extremely grateful for all the support that we have received," Roberta Colavito concludes.

"We would like to thank everyone for their patience and understanding while we enter this exciting phase of development. It is our goal to provide our customers with the best possible furniture shopping experience and on April 28, we move one step closer to that dream."

The signs have gone up in the windows and the 'Everything Must Go Sale' begins this Saturday (25)at 10.30 am.

Interiors Italia will be offering huge savings on all shop floor display items to clear the store ready for the refit. Customers can also take advantage of extra discounts on offer for new orders during the sale period both in store and online.

BUSINESS PROFILE

Business: Interiors Italia

Address: 79 Darlington Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 4JD

Telephone: 01902 428489

Email: sales@italianfurnitureshop.co.uk
Website: www.italianfurnitureshop.co.uk

Service under way to help with birth issues

The Maternal Wellbeing Service

A TEAM of maternal wellbeing specialists (Esteem) is putting the word out about its service, with a meeting due in Oldbury next Monday.

Covering the whole of Sandwell the group provides talking therapies to ladies and their families whose emotional wellbeing/mental health has been negatively affected by pregnancy, traumatic birth, having a new baby or the loss of a baby for example stillbirth, sudden infant death (cot death), termination, or miscarriage.

The team consists of manager Claire Cooper, Senior link worker Jane Taylor and link worker Anna Walker. The Maternal Wellbeing Service is running with the support of volunteers from Warley Baptist Church. For more information regarding the group please contact Anna on 0121 530 8303.

Due to the nature of the group, people are asked to arrange alternative care for children. The group is held at Warley Baptist Church Community Hall, Castle Road, East Oldbury, running from 1pm to 2.30pm on the last Monday of every month.

Roadworks on M5 will start in weeks

A MAJOR roadworks scheme that will see the speed limit of a stretch of the M5 cut to 30mph for 18 months will start after Easter.

Drivers travelling through the region are facing major disruption while repairs are made to the crumbling Oldbury viaduct. The stretch between junctions one for West Bromwich and two for Oldbury will be affected and work expected to continue until the end of 2018.

Alternate sides of the carriageway will be closed, with two narrow lanes of traffic running in both directions on the opposite side.

FOCUS ON OLDBURY

Group creativity's knit to be underestimated

A COUNCIL-RUN team based in Oldbury, that provides day opportunities for people with a range of physical and learning disabilities, is looking for more people to get involved.

Creative Arts was behind the award-winning Ceramic Garden but needs more people to get involved in its latest community project – The Pull of Wool.

By Lucy Thompson

The team bring together people from around Sandwell ranging from four-year-old pupils to 92-year-old pensioners. Creative Arts wants to collect interesting photos of people knitting in unusual locations as well as photos of people who don't normally knit.

People are also encouraged to donate unwanted wool or woollen items, and get involved with the team at Creative Arts to help knit items for display. They are all set to be displayed to the public later this year to raise awareness of Creative Arts and its positive contribution to the local community.

Councillor Ann Shackleton, Sandwell Council's cabinet member for social care, said: "They did some amazing work on the Ceramic Garden initiative and deserve support to come up with another interesting piece of creative work.

"I would hope that anyone who can help this excellent organisation on their latest exciting project will get in touch."

The project follows the award-winning Ceramic Garden project, which is due to feature in the Royal Horticultural Society's Malvern Spring Show from May 11 to 14. The garden won a top award from the Royal Horticultural Society's Britain in Bloom Award for the It's Your Neighbourhood category.

Richard Flatley, from Creative Arts, added: "We're after photos of people knitting in unusual places, or just photos of people who you would not expect to be knitting." Anyone who wishes to find out more, or to provide photos, get involved or donate some woollen items can visit Creative Arts, on Cyprus Street.

People can call 0121 552 8095 or visit the Creative Arts Project Facebook page.

The Creative Arts team needs more people to get involved with their latest community project

Operations chief comes in for BCTG

Sarah Matthews

LEADING West Midland training consortia BCTG has appointed Sarah Matthews as its first female group operations manager.

The appointment by the Oldbury-based firm, which oversees training providers across the Black Country, Birmingham and Solihull areas, enables owner-director Chris Luty to step aside in the day-to-day running of the firm.

Mr Luty, who established BCTG – formerly Black Country Training Group – 20 years ago, said Sarah Matthews' experience within the company, which employs 46 staff, will ensure its continued success. "This sector sees constant change because of the relentless new schemes successive governments bring in around apprenticeships and targeting young people who are not in education, employment or training."

BCTG, in Taylors Lane, oversees training and support programmes with providers as well as managing Black Country Talent Match in Sandwell, The Apprenticeship Works in West Bromwich and Further Training.

Our services at a glance.

For more information visit our brand new website: *www.denture-clinic.co.uk*

Quality dentures

We believe our traditional dentures, hand-crafted in our laboratory on the premises, are some of the best available. We use only the highest quality materials, the most realistic prosthetic teeth and our technicians have been hand picked because of their exceptional skills.

Implant retained

The ultimate in solving denture stabilisation problems, implant retained over-dentures can be life-changing. You will be able to eat what you want when you want, never need denture adhesives again and experience no more sore spots or those ill-timed, embarrassing moments.

Suction dentures

The Ultra Suction System continues to draw the largest number of inquiries to the Denture Clinic. The denture looks like any other, but a clever, one-way diaphragm creating a sucking force onto the soft tissues of the mouth can give it the edge over its traditional counterparts.

Same day teeth

For the right person it is possible for us to fit a full arch of upper or lower teeth in a single day. A highly skilled procedure, it engages the disciplines of our Practice Principal, implant dentist and lab technicians. Quite literally, your smile can be restored in just a few hours.

Partial dentures

Sometimes referred to as removable bridges, partial dentures are used to span the gaps left by teeth that have been lost. They can be fitted to the lower or upper jaw and are essential for maintaining the long-term integrity of the mouth. Without them, existing teeth can become compromised.

Chrome dentures

Cobalt chrome dentures are noted for being the most hygienic and strong. They are also thinner and more streamlined than their acrylic counterparts. Due to the strength of manufacturing materials it is possible to achieve constructions that cannot be realised with an acrylic denture.

Immediate dentures

Immediate dentures are exactly what they suggest and can be fitted immediately after surgery to remove failing teeth. The preparation process involves a skilled clinical assessment of your mouth and collaboration between our Practice Principal and one of our dentists.

Cosmetic dentures

Can dentures ever be glamorous? Indeed they can and the Denture Clinic has plenty of satisfied customers who have undergone a transformation in their looks. Regularly we've been able to turn back the clock with prosthetics that support facial tissues that had become sunken and pinched.

The Denture Clinic also offers its own dedicated Practice Plan, Interest free finance, Copy dentures, Denture relines, Denture stabilisation, Same-day repairs, Dental sedation, A referring service for fellow practitioners and 3D scanning

Not all dentures *are made equal*

Practice Principal
Steven Burchell
Dip CDT RCS(Eng)
GDC 108353
looks at what he believes sets his clinic apart in its prosthetic provision

NESTLING in the heart of the Black Country is the Denture Clinic. Our nearest landmark is Dudley's famous castle and of course, we have Teddy Gray's legendary herbal sweet factory opposite our practice.

By any standards, the clinic is remarkably well presented, but it's not what we are noted for though we are fiercely proud of what's been achieved over the years at our North Street site.

As someone said: "Who'd have thought little old Dudley would become famous for its dentures?"

It's not quite like the acclaim enjoyed by our industrial forefathers, who in the early 1800s saw the area become pivotal in the Industrial Revolution, but our teeth have certainly made an impression on a national scale.

We attract patients from Dorset in the south, from the Scottish Highlands and North Wales and the ex-pats community from Spain and Portugal. Remarkable!

And we find the kind of patients we attract equally exceptional: A multi-millionaire with his own jet, a former SAS mountain warfare specialist, healthcare professionals, company directors and 'our little old ladies from across the town.'

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Can dentures ever be glamorous? Yes, a thousand times yes.

Cosmetic dentures? Who'd have thought it, but that's what we can do and 'natural' is our hallmark.

The Denture Clinic works alongside our North Street Dental and Implant Clinic and much of our denture provision also utilises the skills of our general dentistry practitioners. It's a powerful symmetry that successfully fuses a number of disciplines to give our patients the best possible clinical outcomes.

Dental technician Steven Morris (GDC 142474) works on traditional dentures

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Denture Clinic

Mayoral candidate pledges to freeze region's bus fares

LABOUR'S candidate for West Midlands Mayor has pledged to freeze bus fares at £4.40 a day as part of a new transport strategy for the West Midlands.

Siôn Simon says the flat rate will apply for passengers on all buses and trams across the region. Announcing his plan in West Bromwich, Mr Simon said that by taking back control from London, he plans to boost the 'comparatively poor' public transport provision across the region.

Mr Simon said: "For too long people have been ripped off because politicians in London have taken no interest in our transport here, while travel operators have put their own interests above those of the people using public transport.

"The buses that we use are run by companies. The unwritten deal – struck by government three decades ago – was that the companies are given almost complete freedom to operate on our roads, roads that we pay for, in return for good quality services at reasonable prices.

Tariffs

"But that deal between the companies and the public has been broken, bus companies have been left to their own devices. Our buses – unclean, sometimes leaving people feeling unsafe, and always costing more – tell the story of the so-called 'small things' that are actually really big things.

"We have over 20 different public transport tariffs, with people often paying more than they should – no wonder people feel like they're being ripped off."

The price cap and freeze is the first part of Mr Simon's West Midlands Transport Plan. It also includes the introduction of an integrated contactless payment system across the region's public transport network, that in time will include all public transport.

Arts groups' funds boost in pipeline

TWO nationally-recognised arts groups in Sandwell are set to secure funding to keep their creative services going for community groups and people in the borough.

Multistory and Black Country Touring are in line for significant grant funding between them over four years. A report to Sandwell Council's cabinet meeting yesterday, Wednesday, recommended supporting both highly-successful organisations which deliver diverse arts programmes.

Based in West Bromwich, Multistory works with outstanding artists to make art with, for and about the people of Sandwell.

It was behind Magnum photographer Martin Parr's popular Black Country Stories exhibition.

Black Country Touring, based in Carters Green, brings professional theatre and dance to audiences across the Black Country using community centres, schools, libraries, colleges and arts centres as its venues.

It's no spin, Gemma gets on board to help

Gemma Cairney, centre, is joined by pupils Charlie Baker, 14, and head girl Charlotte Forrester, 17, outside her yellow bus

A star of BBC Radio one visited West Midland pupils to talk about the issues affecting them during a school visit to promote her new book.

Birmingham-born DJ Gemma Cairney, who presents advice show The Surgery, brought her big yellow bus to Wolverhampton Grammar School to speak to students and discuss Open: A Toolkit for How Magic and Messed Up Life Can Be.

Zoe Rowley, head librarian at the grammar, said Gemma's visit was a life-changing experience for the students. She said: "She made them believe they can do something with their life and if they want something to change then they have the power to do it themselves."

The 31-year-old took part in a question and answer session with around 300 pupils from schools across the West Midlands.

Students were also invited to record podcasts with Gemma and board her bus, which had a library, artificial grass pitch and hula hoops.

Miss Rowley said the visit had helped the children talk about what mattered to them. She said: "A lot of children feel hounded on social media and about what they post.

"Gemma told them they should feel free to express their opinion without caring what other people think.

"She helped them embrace themselves and feel comfortable with who they are."

The DJ's book is a guide to help young people navigate love, friendships, health and other aspects of growing up.

Top town for illicit affairs is revealed

STOURBRIDGE has been ranked the most adulterous town in the West Midlands in a new survey.

The Infidelity Index, compiled by IllicitEncounters.com, mapped data from its 1.1 million members against each town's adult population – in a bid to find the most adulterous towns and cities in the country.

It is home to 738 adulterers, or 1.17 per cent of the entire adult population is allegedly cheating. It wasn't the only town from the region to feature in the top 140 towns, however.

Halesowen was ranked 46th, Walsall 61st, Willenhall 77th, West Bromwich 87th, Dudley 88th, and Sutton Coldfield 133rd.

According to the survey, the most adulterous town in the country was Royal Tunbridge Wells in Kent, while the town of Barry in Wales was ranked the least adulterous.

IllicitEncounters spokesman Christian Grant said: "People have had affairs since the dawn of time, but the last decade in particular has seen a large spike.

"The site has grown exponentially, and it's thanks to the turbulent economy and increase in house prices that has left many people financially crippled, unable to divorce should their marriage hit the rocks. So, they seek the only other viable alternative that they have: an affair."

Free draw for trip to San Francisco

A LUCKY person can bag the trip of a lifetime to San Francisco due to Manchester Airport sponsoring Birmingham Pride this year. Those interested are asked to log on to Birmingham Pride's website and enter their details in to join the free prize draw.

This year's event takes place on Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 with tickets available now. For more information or to enter the competition visit www.birminghampride.com

Green oceans under threat

THE sun is out, the sap is rising and spring is in the air. There's nothing like a walk in the park on a crisp, sunny day.

Be it the glorious Victorian features of Wolverhampton's West Park, the ancient ruins of Priory Park in Dudley, or the lush woodland of Walsall's famous arboretum, there is something wonderful about the green open spaces which define our county.

"They are the lungs of the Black Country," says Councillor Mrs Hilary Bills, Dudley Council's cabinet member for environmental services, and secretary of the Friends of Hurst Green Park.

"We are very fortunate in the Black Country," she says. "We call it the Black Country, but we have got these oceans of green space."

But a recent report by MPs warns that many of these green oceans could be under threat if action is not taken soon.

Decline

The parliamentary local government select committee warned that Britain's parks are at a 'tipping point', facing a period of severe decline, due to a combination of funding pressures, weaknesses in the planning process, and a shortage of housing. It says more needs to be done to recognise the contribution parks make not just as a place of leisure, but to our mental and physical wellbeing.

The report says more than 92 per cent of park budgets have been cut by local authorities, which are themselves struggling to balance the books due to reduced funding from central government.

The West Midlands has certainly not been immune from these pressures. Wolverhampton Council has to make savings of £23.5 million over the next 2017/18 financial year, while Walsall Council is looking to save £86 million over the next four years, and inevitably parks are down the list of priorities compared to statutory provision which local authorities have to provide by law.

Walsall Council looked into scrapping cricket pitches and bowling greens in its parks, but ultimately rejected the proposals after public consultation.

The flower beds in West Park, Wolverhampton looking in top condition

Councillor Bills says there have been huge pressures in Dudley, too.

"Dudley has lost £258 million funding since 2011, that's a third of our total funding, and we have had to make staff reductions," she says.

"At the moment, the thing that is saving us is our wonderful friends groups who are giving up their time volunteering for the good of the community."

The MPs' committee warns that the UK may not meet the UN's Sustainable Development Goal in respective of safe and inclusive access to parks and green spaces by 2030.

It calls on councils to produce strategic plans that recognise the value of parks beyond leisure and recreation, and set out how they will be managed to maximise their contribution to wider local authority agendas, such as promoting healthy lifestyles, tackling social exclusion and managing flood risk. The plans could open up parks to support and funding from beyond their usual budgets and services areas, it adds.

The National Trust says the committee report is a "wake-up call".

"It is full of practical proposals that show the problem can be solved if we act together now, with an ambition and spirit that reflects people's passion for parks," says the trust's Harry Bowell.

Trees line the lake at Walsall Arboretum

The revamped Priory Park in Dudley with reinstated rock garden

Lock-up for drug dealers linked to Johnson crew

MEMBERS of a group linked to the notorious Johnson crew gang have been jailed after police smashed a drugs ring in the Black Country and Birmingham.

Gang members have been locked for more than 30 years in total with £120,000 of class A drugs taken off the streets.

Officers caught the group red-handed in possession of the drugs during a covert surveillance operation.

Police have since welcomed the sentences saying that people's lives had been 'ruined by their criminal behaviour'.

Anthony Johnson, aged 32, from Preston Road, Winson Green; Ashfaq Ahmed, 37, from Grasmere Road, Winson Green and Ravelle Hutchinson, 20, from Clissold Street, Hockley, all pleaded guilty to offences including conspiracy to supply crack cocaine, conspiracy to supply heroin and money laundering.

Jermaine Tulloch

Augustine Duruji

Ashfaq Ahmed

Narinderpal Sandhu

Ravelle Hutchinson

Anthony Johnson

Obstructing

They were sentenced to between five years and nine years imprisonment each at Birmingham Crown Court on March 6.

Johnson was also banned from driving for three years after he is released.

Augustine Duruji, 42, from Abbey Close, West Bromwich, pleaded not guilty to the same offences and was handed a 10-year sentence.

Fellow defendant, 31-year-old Jermaine Tulloch, from Rockford Road, Great Barr, was found guilty of obstructing a police officer after he threw cocaine worth almost £9,000 out of his car window when he was stopped in his car in June last year.

He was given a one-year suspended sentence.

Narinderpal Sandhu, 37, from Bell Street, Tipton, was given a community order after pleading guilty to money laundering.

Detective Inspector James Mahon from the Regional Organised Crime Unit, said: "This was a major operation to tackle the supply of drugs to the Winson Green, Smethwick and West Bromwich areas of the city and disrupt gang activity.

"Thanks to our surveillance work we were able to catch these men in possession of drugs in their cars and at their home addresses and mount a successful prosecution against them.

"Many lives could potentially have been ruined by their criminal behaviour and we are delighted that, thanks to the sentences handed, out these offenders and the drugs they would have sold have been taken off the streets."

All the men were linked to the notorious Johnson crew gang, police have said.

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Divorce? We are here to help you get through it

Commercial feature

HERE at Talbots Law we aim to clarify the Divorce and Separation process for you. We do not underestimate how unsettling and stressful separation can be to all parties involved.

Each case is unique to the parties involved and their particular circumstances. There are often 101 questions our clients wish to know the answers to and we aim to answer as many as we can in a straightforward and clear way. Some we are often asked are along the following lines:-

1. Is there such thing as a quickie divorce? On average, a divorce will take about six months. If both parties are co-operating, it could be four or five months. However there are lots of other things that need to be considered like sorting out finances, sale of the house perhaps, pensions and of course, children.

2. Is there such a thing as a common-law man and wife? The answer to that is no. Separation of couples who are not married has to be looked at in a different way as the courts do not have the power to deal with people's finances or their relationship in the same way as if they were married. We do have considerable experience in dealing with people who are separating, even when they are not married.

3. Are Pre Nuptial Agreements binding? In happy or uncertain times people often forget to think about what might happen if things do not go according to plan in their new relationship. There is not a specific law that says such agreements are binding. The courts are tending to uphold more of these that have been entered into before a marriage, but there is a long list of requirements that needs to have been met for the court to say that the agreement is binding. Two of those requirements are that there has been full financial disclosure by both parties and also that both parties have had their own legal advice.

James Wright – here to help

4. What about our children? When separating, it is often upsetting for parents to have to consider what happens to their children. It is always hoped that the parents can decide what is in the best interests of their children between themselves. If they can't, the court will help them out and, if necessary, intervene. There are certain things that are helpful to know in these circumstances. It is always thought best for children to continue to have a relationship with both parents unless there is a certain reason as to why not. If there cannot be an agreement between the two parties, the court will make a final decision in the best interests of the children.

5. Are there other ways of resolving your case apart from court? Yes there is. This is known as mediation. If the circumstances are right in your case, then it may be possible to meet with a mediator to discuss not only arrangements for your children, but also financial arrangements following separation. Mediation can be more cost effective in the long run and it tries to encourage parties to sort out their own situation amicably.

We have only given you a snapshot of the things that need to be discussed with a lawyer. We understand that your case is individual to your particular circumstances and your family's needs. It is only when we talk in detail about your circumstances that we can provide detailed and tailored advice with options for you to consider. To speak to one of our Family team about these issues or any other you may be considering, please call 0800 118 1500 or visit www.talbotslaw.co.uk for more information.

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The Ticket

COMEBACK KID JAMES IS ON THE ROAD AGAIN

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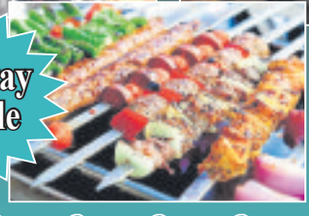

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Filling an arena . . . ? It's not Impossible

He's the first to admit he could have ended up on the 'scrapheap' for good, but James Arthur is reclaiming his dreams. The singer talks to The Ticket about growing up, and why arena tours and a self-help book are up next.

The night before the Brits last month, James tweeted that if anyone had told him a year ago he'd be up for two awards, his response would have been, 'F**k off'.

And who could blame him? His tumultuous period after winning The X Factor back in 2012 was well-documented.

He rowed with fellow musicians online, offended the LGBT community and got dropped by Syco, Simon Cowell's record label.

It all read like a tale of self-destruction, rather than one of music success.

But now the Middlesbrough-born 29-year-old is back – and as far as surprise turnarounds go, he's crafted a career-revival that bows down only to Craig David's. He'll bring his solo tour to plays Birmingham's O2 Academy on Friday, March 24, and is on the line-up for V Festival in Weston Park in August.

James may not have taken any gongs home from the Brits but says it was an 'honour' to be nominated. Before that, his sophomore album, Back From The Edge – released in October, shot to number one in the charts, as did lead single Say You Won't Let Go; he's back on the books at Syco, and has just started on a UK tour that runs throughout March.

Back from the brink – James's new tour sold out in 10 minutes

MELTDOWN

"It's mind-blowing," he mutters softly, rolling his rings around his fingers as he speaks.

"At the Brits two years ago, Jimmy Carr got up and made some crack about me having a meltdown, and I remember watching it, thinking, 'I am a joke in this country, there's no coming back from this'.

"Not only was I an X Factor winner that got dropped by Syco, and when that happens you're never heard of again, but everyone thought I was a clown. I was in those 'where are they now' articles and I was like, 'F**k me, I'm that guy, I'm on the scrapheap'."

James credits his escape from the overcrowded pop scrapheap to a spirit forged through his unbalanced upbringing.

"I remember when my parents put me up for foster care and no one gave a f**k about me. I've been a survivor for so many years, I've always felt like I've been trying to survive and always found a way to climb out of the s**t. That's just been a theme of my life, it's the mentality I've had to get out of the mire."

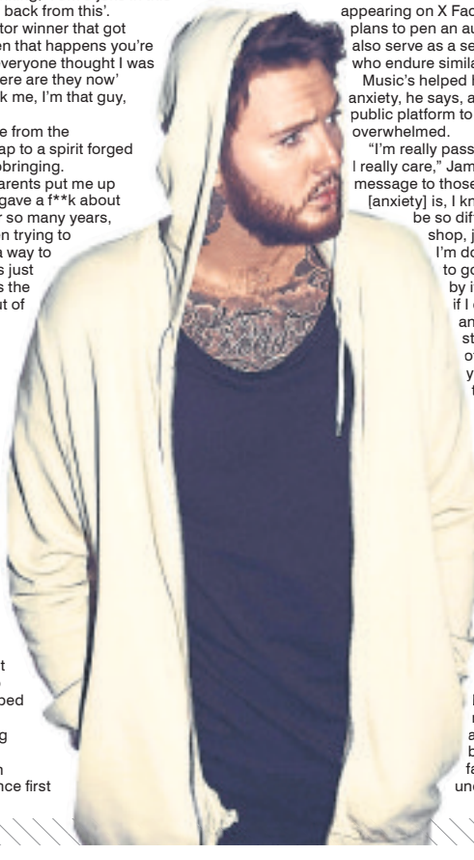
Opening up about that journey – from living in a bedsit, to winning The X Factor, and then watching it all crumble down around him – he says it left him feeling 40 or 50 years old.

"It's like I've been around for a long time, and to some people it might seem a bit bizarre me saying, 'I'm back from the edge', but it is wild when you think about it."

He says the comeback was fuelled by his on/off girlfriend, professional dancer Jessica Grist.

"I pushed everyone away, I ignored everyone. It was just me and Jess, who was so supportive and helped me through a million panic attacks and a million calling ambulances."

James has suffered from 'crippling' panic attacks since first appearing on X Factor, and reveals he has plans to pen an autobiography that will also serve as a self-help book for fans who endure similar issues.



Music's helped him cope with his anxiety, he says, and he wants to use his public platform to inspire others who feel overwhelmed.

"I'm really passionate about it and I really care," James explains. "My message to those that do have it [anxiety] is, I know regular things can be so difficult – going to the shop, just going outside – but I'm doing it. And I'm having to go out and be judged by it and by the world. So if I can travel to France and play a gig in a train station with thousands of people around, then you can get up and go to the shop, buy a pint of milk and you will survive, you'll be all right."

As for returning to Syco – the label reportedly wanted him back after Simon Cowell listened to James's second record – the singer says he initially wanted to reject their offer, but relented because he's a 'sucker for a story'.

"When they asked me to come back, I thought, 'Well I'm number one on iTunes already, so f**k you', but I'm a massive fan of fairy tales and underdog stories. I'm the one person in history that they came back to, I like that that will be written, it's a bit of an ego thing.

> *I pushed everyone away, I ignored everyone. It was just me and Jess*

"I felt like I had to prove myself to them, to let them know how good I am, how mature I've become and how much I've grown up."

For James, that sense of maturity means having more diplomacy when dealing with the label's A&R – those responsible for looking after musicians and their output.

"I'd never experienced A&R before and it p***ed me off. I hated A&R. I was like, 'Don't tell me how to make music, I've just won The X Factor, have a bit of faith in me – I'm James Arthur, I'm the best thing that's ever come from this show. I'm gonna make you a lot of money'," he admits.

"But that's not how it works. If you're signed to a major label, you have an A&R, they do have to give opinions and if I was left to structure songs, we'd have eight-minute, obscure left-of-centre tracks."

He's pleased that Back From The Edge's success means he can now perform some different songs live. No doubt his fans felt the same; James's UK tour sold out in just over 10 minutes.

"We could've done arenas this time," he says, "but I'm happy because I love to do those packed out rooms."

If his current winning streak continues, he'll be playing those arena tours in no time...

- **James plays O2 Academy Birmingham on Friday.**
- **For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.**

On tour – New Model Army

Rock stalwarts spring back after release of album Winter

STALWARTS of the alternative rock scene for more than 35 years, New Model Army are back with a tour that brings them to Bilston's Robin 2 venue on Saturday.

The tour comes after releasing latest album Winter with customary contrariness at the height of last summer.

Formed by Justin Sullivan in Bradford in 1980, New Model Army's beginnings were inspired by punk rock and the incendiary atmosphere of the times.

Since then, they have had a long, creative and eventful journey. They have been massively influential in post-punk, folk-rock, political-rock, goth, metal and all kinds of musical sub-cultures but have steadfastly refused to belong to any club that would have them as members.

NMA have built up an almost religious devotion amongst fans. Having grasped early on that the Internet was going to revolutionise the music industry, from the mid-1990s they set out on the now fashionable wholly independent path of controlling all aspects of their output. As a result, they have outlasted most of their peers.

Winter was released on the band's own Attack Attack label. This album saw New Model Army receive the best critical response of their career and top 30 chart positions in UK and Germany.

The album is a powerful and emotionally intense body of work. Says founder, lead singer and main songwriter Justin Sullivan: "I think Winter has a really strong identity. It is very much the sound of people in difficult places, something that so many of us can relate to at the moment, on a lot of different levels. We made a deliberate choice in mixing it to sound more aggressive and a little less polished."

Originally formed as a three piece, the current five piece features Michael Dean on drums, Dean White on keyboards and guitar, Marshall Gill on guitar and Ceri Monger on bass.

Tickets for New Model Army, supported by Under A Banner, at the Robin 2 cost £20 in advance or £22 on the door.

I'm just a normal bloke – Mouth of the South

AFTER a sell-out autumn tour, the star of BBC TV's Live At The Apollo, Mock The Week and Channel 4's 8 Out Of 10 Cats, Rob Beckett is back on the road touring the UK.

The 31-year-old comic from South London, nicknamed 'the Mouth of the South' due to his toothy grin, is one of the most popular comedians in the country, quick-witted with a matey likability.

"I just try and be a normal bloke," observes Rob, who is the popular host of the Absolute Radio show, Rock'n'Roll Football.

"At the end of the day, we're just chatting on stage. I'm genuinely grateful that people come to see me. If it wasn't for the audience, I wouldn't have a jet-wash, I'd just have an ordinary hose!

"I've done hundreds of low-paid jobs in my time. I used to work in a flower market carrying around bags of compost. So the fact that I can now put my face on a poster and people will turn up for the show makes me so pleased."

The comedian, who between 2012 and 2014 co-presented ITV2 spin-off show I'm a Celebrity...Get Me Out of Here! NOW!, says his rapport with audiences stems from his natural curiousity.

"I'm just nosey! I love talking to the audience and getting them involved. I really like hearing their stories."

Another element that keeps his Mouth of the South show fresh is the fact that Rob's material is constantly evolving.

The stand-up says:"I don't want to be living in fear of altering a routine. I'd rather change it and let it progress. I enjoy that much more. That's how I can do 200 shows on a tour because it's always growing and changing. If I didn't do that, I'd have gone mad by now."

On tour Rob will be covering such down-to-earth, subjects as holidays, Christmas, cold calls and nights out. His routines are taken from his own life.

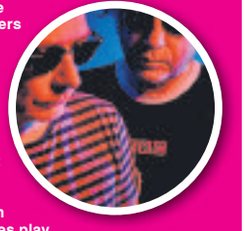
"I enjoy making people laugh. I'm as funny as I can be for 90 minutes. I try and take people's minds off things for an hour and a half. If you ever stop enjoying that, that's the moment to give up."

He adds: "Before I did stand-up, I'd always been rubbish at everything. I was doing all sorts of terrible jobs on the minimum wage and living in a grotty flat in Lewisham.

"Then I started doing comedy, and all of a sudden I finally found something I was good at and I'm not letting it go."

Rob comes to Birmingham Town Hall on Saturday (April 8). See www.thsh.co.uk or call 0121 780 3333.

Brothers set to spread some joy at 02 Institute



INFLUENTIAL Scottish rock band The Jesus & Mary Chain, AKA Reid brothers Jim and William (pictured), release Damage and Joy, their first album for 19 years today and play Birmingham O2 Institute on March 31.

The Blossoms had a great 2016, playing Glastonbury, headlining their first UK tour and hitting the no1 spot with their eponymous debut album. See them at Birmingham O2 Academy on Wednesday (March 29).

Let's hope it's T-shirt weather when Liverpool's indie popsters Circa Waves play Brum's O2 Institute on Thursday (March 30), following the release this month of second album Different Creatures.

Acerbic Lee set to provide comedy

AFTER several years of his BBC TV show Stewart Lee's Comedy Vehicle, Content Provider is acerbic Shropshire-born Lee's first new full-length show since the award-winning Carpet Remnant World. It is being staged at the Symphony Hall, Birmingham, on Monday and Tuesday night. Other comedy highlights are in Wolverhampton with Ignacio Lopez and Simon Emanuel at the Grand Theatre's Encore Lounge tomorrow (Friday); then Harry Hill's sometime assistant and Albert Square resident Charlie Baker at Wolverhampton Slade Rooms on Saturday.

Short Breaks & Holiday
from only £79!

SHOWTIME — With inclusive admission to top shows & acts in 2017!

Solid Silver 60's Tour & Liverpool — 2 DAYS

Sat 13 May £119

What's included?
- Coach travel with reserved seating throughout
- One night dinner, bed & breakfast at our select hotel
- Visit to Liverpool
- Admission to Solid Silver 60's Tour - live at the Liverpool Philharmonic.

2 DAY SHOWTIME BREAKS

Sat 15 Apr	Thriller Live & Historic York	£99
Wed 26 Apr	Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons	£139
Sat 6 May	Dirty Dancing & Historic York	£129
Sat 6 May	Professor Brian Cox - Live in Liverpool	£119
Fri 12 May	Micky Flanagan - Live (b&b)	£119
Sat 13 May	The Commitments & Historic York	£119
Sat 13 May	Ken Dodd & Liverpool Special	£99
Sat 13 May	The Crucible - Live In Manchester	£99
Fri 19 May	Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone - Live in Concert	£139
Fri 19 May	Elvis World Tour - Live in Liverpool	£99
Sat 20 May	London & Star Wars Identities at the O2	£99
Sat 20 May	Million Dollar Quartet - Live in Manchester	£99
Sat 20 May	Billy Elliot & Historic Chester	£139
Sat 27 May	Adam Ant - Live in Concert	£119

NATIONAL SPORTS — Sensational Sports Breaks....

2 DAY SPORT BREAKS

Thu 13 Apr	Betway Premier League Darts - Live!	£99
Sat 15 Apr	Liverpool & Haydock Races - Easter Special	£99
Sat 13 May	Liverpool & Haydock Races	£99
Sat 13 May	Women's FA Cup Final - Wembley (b&b)	£99
Sat 20 May	FA Vase & FA Trophy Finals - Wembley (b&b)	£99
Sat 20 May	British Touring Car Championship - Oulton Park	£119
Sat 27 May	Liverpool & Chester Races	£99
Sat 10 Jun	London & Polo In The Park (b&b)	£119
Sat 10 Jun	Netball Super league - The Final Four	£119
Sat 1 Jul	Liverpool & Chester Races	£99
Wed 2 Aug	Manchester United Stadium Tour & Liverpool	£99
Sat 5 Aug	Liverpool & Chester Races	£99
Sat 5 Aug	England v South Africa - Old Trafford	£129
Sat 18 Oct	England vs West Indies ODI - Old Trafford	£119

Doncaster Races & York — 2 DAYS

Sat 3 June	£79	Sat 28 Oct	£79
Sat 5 Aug	£79		

What's included?
- Coach travel throughout
- Reserved seating throughout your break
- One night dinner, bed & breakfast at our select hotel
- One night dinner, bed & breakfast at our select hotel
- Visit to York
- Admission to the family enclosure at Doncaster Racecourse.

Explore Europe — Explore the best of Europe.....

German Classic Motor Show 2017 (b&b) — 4 DAYS

Fri 7 Apr £289

What's included?
- Coach travel throughout
- Reserved seating on your holiday coach
- Three nights bed and continental breakfast at the Hotel Mercure, Dusseldorf Kaarst
- All bedrooms with en-suite facilities
- Two full days admission to the Techno Classica Essen 2017

4/5 DAY EUROPEAN BREAKS

Mon 3 Apr	4	Disneyland Spectacular at The Kyriad (b&b)	£319
Mon 3 Apr	4	Disneyland Spectacular at The B&B Hotel (b&b)	£319
Mon 3 Apr	5	Ostend Inclusive & Paddle Steam	£249
Mon 3 Apr	5	Maastricht & Three Countries Inclusive	£259
Mon 3 Apr	4	Disneyland Spectacular at Dream Castle (b&b)	£379
Fri 7 Apr	4	Ostend Inclusive Weekend	£199
Fri 7 Apr	4	Ostend & Bruges City Break (b&b)	£169
Mon 10 Apr	4	Disneyland Spectacular at The Kyriad (b&b)	£329
Mon 10 Apr	4	Disneyland Spectacular at The B&B Hotel (b&b)	£319
Mon 10 Apr	4	Disneyland Paris at the Magic Circus (b&b)	£389
Mon 10 Apr	5	Ostend Inclusive & Paddle Steam	£249
Mon 10 Apr	5	Paris Seine Cruise & Versailles	£299
Mon 10 Apr	5	Rhine Valley Superdeal	£219
Mon 10 Apr	5	Rhine & Moselle Inclusive	£249

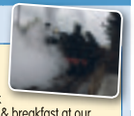
Special Events — Enjoy admission to sensational Special Events.

2 DAY SPECIAL EVENTS BREAKS

Mon 3 Apr	Flying Scotsman Special	£119
Sat 15 Apr	Emmerdale The Tour	£99
Sat 15 Apr	London & The Tall Ships Regatta Easter Special	£119
Sat 22 Apr	Skipton Market & Harrogate Flower Show	£99
Sat 22 Apr	Emmerdale Studio Experience	£99
Sat 6 May	The London Motor Show (b&b)	£99
Sat 13 May	Hobbycrafts, Stitch & Sew - Live!	£79
Sat 13 May	Abingdon Airshow & Historic Bath	£99
Sat 27 May	Chelsea Flower Show (b&b)	£169
Sat 27 May	Truckfest Spectacular & Oxford	£99
Sat 10 Jun	Ideal Home Show & Liverpool	£79
Sat 24 Jun	Victoria at Harewood House	£89
Sat 24 Jun	Harlow Carr Flower Show	£99
Sat 24 Jun	Paul Hollywoods Make & Bake Festival	£99

Cotwolds Wartime 1940's Special — 2 DAYS

Sun 22 April £89



What's included?
- Coach travel throughout
- Reserved seating throughout your break
- One night dinner, bed & breakfast at our select hotel
- All bedrooms with en-suite facilities
- Visit to Stratford upon Avon
- Visit to the Cotswolds 1940's Event with inclusive train journey.

Family Fun — Great breaks for all the family!

Polar Bears, Penguins & Kingdom of Ice — 2 DAYS

Sat 15 Apr	£99	Sat 29 Jul	£99
Sat 20 May	£99	Sat 26 Aug	£99
Sat 17 Jun	£99	Sat 16 Sep	£99

What's included?
- Coach travel throughout
- Reserved seating throughout your break
- One night dinner, bed & breakfast at our select hotel
- Included admission to the Yorkshire Wildlife Park to visit the Polar Bears and numerous other animals
- Included admission to the stunning 'Deep' where visitors can enjoy a unique interactive experience.

2 DAY FAMILY FUN BREAKS

Thu 13 Apr	London & Harry Potter Studio Tour	£119
Sat 15 Apr	Legoland Spectacular (b&b)	£119
Sat 15 Apr	London & Harry Potter Studio Tour	£119
Sat 22 Apr	Longleat Safari Park, Jungle Cruise & Windsor	£99
Sat 29 Apr	Legoland Discovery & Blackpool Funtime	£89
Sat 29 Apr	Islands at Chester Zoo & Llangollen Cruise	£99
Sat 13 May	London Zoo & Thames River Cruise	£119
Sat 20 May	London & Harry Potter Studio Tour	£119
Sat 27 May	Longleat Safari Park, Jungle Cruise & Windsor	£99
Sat 3 Jun	Legoland Discovery & Blackpool Funtime	£89
Sat 10 Jun	London & Harry Potter Studio Tour	£119
Sat 10 Jun	London Zoo & Thames River Cruise	£119
Sat 10 Jun	Islands at Chester Zoo & Llangollen Cruise	£99
Sat 24 Jun	Legoland Spectacular (b&b)	£119

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NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

SATURDAY'S TV MARCH 25

CHOICE

Brendan O'Carroll

All Round to Mrs Brown's (BBC1, 9.15pm)

New series. Mrs Brown's Boys creator, writer and star Brendan O'Carroll dons Agnes's famous cardigan and curlers once again, throwing open the doors of the larger-than-life Irish matriarch's home to host a Saturday night chat show, filmed in front of a live studio audience. Inviting friends, family and special guests to join her in the sitting room, Mrs Brown stages mischievous stunts, and gives a few celebrity visitors a piece of her mind.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Mary Berry Everyday. (R) **12.00** Football Focus. **12.30** Money for Nothing. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Bargain Hunt. **2.15** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.15** Wallace & Gromit: A Matter of Loaf and Death. (R) **3.45 Film:** Brave. (2012) Animated fantasy, with the voice of Kelly Macdonald. **5.10** Who Dares Wins. **5.50** BBC News.

6.00 Regional Programme.

6.10 Pointless Celebrities. Alexander Armstrong and Richard Osman present. (R)

6.55 Let's Sing and Dance for Comic Relief. After three weeks of enthusiastic mimicry, the comedy-themed musical talent show draws to a close. Mel Giedroyc and Sue Perkins are on hand to present a live grand final, in which the six most popular celebrity performers from the previous three rounds battle it out. Back on March 4, first-round judges Katharine Ryan, Jo Brand and Frank Skinner were suitably impressed by Sara Pascoe's acrobatic turn as Chandelier singer Sia, while the public were wowed by Rickie Haywood and Melvin Odoom's 1990s-era Will Smith medley. These two acts became the first to grab a confirmed place in the final, and tonight, they perform alongside their rivals from successive weeks to determine which off-beat performance will ultimately be named the winner. Taking a seat on the panel this week are Rufus Hound and Jason Manford, while Zara Larsson and Dua Lipa perform. Last in the series.

8.25 Casualty. Robyn's baby daughter is rushed into NICU following her premature birth, and the new mother struggles to decide whether to follow her head or her heart when it comes to treatment.

9.15 All Round to Mrs Brown's. New series. Brendan O'Carroll steps into the guise of Agnes Brown once again to host a Saturday night chat show, featuring mischievous stunts and appearances by celebrity visitors.

10.15 BBC News; Weather.; National Lottery Update.

10.35 Film: Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End. (2007) Fantasy adventure sequel, with Johnny Depp and Geoffrey Rush.

2.10 (BST) Weather for the Week Ahead. **2.15** BBC News.

BBC2

6.20 A to Z of TV Gardening. (R) **7.05 Film:** A Damsel in Distress. (1937) **8.40 Film:** Hue and Cry. (1947) **10.00** Growing Up Wild: Natural World. (R) **11.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **12.00** Two Greedy Italians: Still Hungry. (R) **1.00** War Films, Talking Pictures. (R) **1.45 Film:** The Wooden Horse. (1950) Fact-based Second World War drama, starring Leo Genn. **3.25** Flog It! (R) **4.00** University Challenge. (R) **4.30** Only Connect. (R) **5.00** Gardeners' World. (R) **5.30** Puerto Rico – Island of Enchantment: Natural World. (R)

6.30 Wild Ireland: The Edge of the World. Part two of two. (R)

7.30 When Lynn Barber Met Phyllida Barlow. Veteran journalist Lynn Barber interviews sculptor and art teacher Phyllida Barlow, 30 years after they first met as young mothers living in North London.

8.00 Grand Tours of the Scottish Islands. Paul Murton crosses the great natural harbour of Scapa Flow to the island of Flotta, before heading round the main Island of Orkney to Stronsay.

8.30 Dad's Army. Mainwaring gives the platoon a lecture in communications and his men have an opportunity to put what they have learnt into action when an enemy aircraft ditches in a reservoir. (R)

9.00 Paula Rego: Secrets and Stories. Making use of new interviews and a vast archive of home video, film-maker Nick Willing compiles an intimate portrait of his mother, the celebrated painter Paula Rego. While Rego has been notoriously private and guarded about her personal life, she opens up to her son, discussing secrets and stories from her live, which has seen her battle fascism, misogyny in art world, and manic depression. Willing's film dictates his mother's story from her native Portugal, where she used her pictures as a weapon against dictatorship, through to settling in London, where she turned her craft toward tackling women's issues such as abortion rights.

10.30 QI XL.

11.15 Film: The Reluctant Fundamentalist. (2012) Drama, starring Riz Ahmed and Liev Schreiber.

2.15 Film: (BST) Albatross. (2011) **3.40** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Bottom Knocker Street. **6.10** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.25** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Sooty. (R) **6.55** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.00** Oddbods. (R) **7.05** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Horrid Henry. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: Teen Titans Go! **8.30** Scrambled!: Bear Grylls Survival School. **9.05** Scrambled!: Adventure Time. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Alphabetical. (R) **10.30 Film:** Carry On Follow That Camel. (1967) **12.15** ITV News; Weather. **12.25 Film:** Horrid Henry: The Movie. (2011) Children's comedy, starring Theo Stevenson. **2.10** All Star Family Fortunes. (R) **3.00** Bargain Shop Wars. (R) **3.30** Tipping Point. (R) **4.30** The Chase. (R) **5.25** Regional Programme ; Weather.**5.40** ITV News; Weather.

6.00 You've Been Framed! Unlimited. Harry Hill narrates.

7.00 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway. The entertainer duo try their hands at archery in Ant v Dec, and Take That join the pair for a special End of the Show Show.

8.30 The Voice UK. The sought-after contract with Polydor Records becomes ever more tangible a goal as the eight remaining would-be pop icons enter the semi-final. Having survived auditions, the battle rounds, the knockout stage and the quarter-finals, the contestants should be more than a little familiar with the pressures of a live performance. However, with a place in the grand final in the offing, the pressure has never been higher for the singers. As always, coaches Will.i.am, Tom Jones, Gavin Rossdale and Jennifer Hudson are on hand to deliver their verdicts on each performer's voice-work, and ultimately cut the number of hopeful stars by half, as only four competitors can progress through to the final. Emma Willis provides viewers with access to all the backstage drama and on-stage reactions as events unfold.

10.20 ITV News; Weather.

10.35 Lethal Weapon. A string of neighbourhood burglaries hits close to home for Murtaugh. (R)

11.35 The Chase. (R)

12.30 Jackpot247. **4.00** (BST) Who's Doing the Dishes? (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.15 The King of Queens. (R) **6.40** Mobil 1 The Grid. **7.10** British Rally Championship. **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.25** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.55** The Simpsons. (R) **11.25** The Simpsons. (R) **11.55** The Simpsons. (R) **12.30** Extreme Food. **1.00** Formula 1 Australian Grand Prix Qualifying Highlights. **2.50** The Restoration Man. (R) **3.35** A Place in the Sun: Summer Sun. (R) **4.35** Location, Location, Location. (R) **5.35** Grand Designs. (R)

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Escape to the Chateau. Dick and Angel only have a few weeks to prepare for their wedding, but the chateau is nowhere near ready to receive the 200 guests they have invited and finding reliable, affordable workers is proving difficult. Dick oversees the damming of the moat and the installation of a new, eco-friendly sewage system, while Angel turns her attention to giving the rooms a distinctive decor. Last in the series. (R)

8.00 Film: The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel. (2011) Seven English pensioners looking for a fresh start are drawn to an advert for a hotel in the Indian city of Jaipur, and plan to spend their retirement there. They arrive to find the building dilapidated but are won over by the enthusiastic young manager, and each embarks on their own adventures in the city. Comedy drama, starring Judi Dench, Bill Nighy, Maggie Smith and Dev Patel.

10.25 Film: Robin Hood. (2010) An archer returning from the crusades faces a plot by a traitorous knight to bring about a French conquest of England. Medieval adventure, with Russell Crowe and Cate Blanchett.

2.00 (BST) Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. Part one of two. Gordon Ramsay visits Mill Street Bistro in Norwalk, Ohio, where he encounters a difficult owner who claims he has the best menu from New York to Los Angeles. (R) **2.50** The Last Leg. Singer-songwriter James Blunt joins Adam Hills, Josh Widdicombe and Alex Brooker for a comic review of the significant moments of the past seven days. (R) **3.50** Hollyoaks. Omnibus.

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **9.55** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **10.30** Access. **10.35** On Benefits: Life on the Dole. (R) **11.30** On Benefits: Life on the Dole. (R) **12.30** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **1.30** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **2.30** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **3.30** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **4.30** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **5.30** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R)

6.25 NCIS. The first instalment of a two-part crossover with NCIS: New Orleans, in which the DC team co-operates with their Louisiana counterparts to catch a poisoner. (R)

7.10 NCIS: New Orleans. The final part of a crossover with the original NCIS series. Ellie Bishop heads to New Orleans to help Pride track down the person responsible for the aircraft murders. (R)

8.00 NCIS. The team suspects foul play when a seaman who was set to testify before a grand jury dies before he can make his court appearance. When it becomes clear the man was murdered, the subsequent investigation reveals that a previously thwarted human-trafficking ring has been re-established. Meanwhile, a storm causes a massive power outage, and McGee seeks a room for the night among his colleagues. Naval crime drama, starring Sean Murray.

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 When Celebrity Goes Horribly Wrong. Contributors including Union J's Jaymi Hensley, Vanessa Feltz, Carole Malone, Adam Rickitt and Carol Decker recall the popstars, actors, comedians and even astronauts embroiled in everything from sex scandals to televised meltdowns. Unflattering episodes featured include Jimmy Carr's public shaming for tax avoidance, Naomi Campbell's blood diamond debacle, Justin Lee Collins's career-stopping harassment conviction and Leo Sayer's "clean pants" rant in the Celebrity Big Brother house. Plus, Dustin Diamond, of Saved by the Bell fame, reveals the truth behind his ill-judged sex tape and veteran newsreader Ed Mitchell describes how alcoholism left him homeless.

11.55 Access.

12.05 SuperCasino. **4.10 Film:** (BST) Beyond a Reasonable Doubt. (2009) **5.50** Angels of Jarm. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four

7.00 Britain's Outlaws: Highwaymen, Pirates and Rogues **8.00** Timewatch: The Last Days of World War One **9.00** Follow the Money **11.00** Top of the Pops: 1983 **12.15** Blondie: One Way or Another **2.30** (BST) Blondie's New York and the Making of Parallel Lines **3.20** Big in America: British Hits in the USA **4.20** Sounds of the Eighties **4.50** Close

ITV2

11.35 Britain's Got Talent: Ant and Dec's Top 10 Moments **12.35** Take Me Out **1.50 Film:** Rumour Has It (2005) **2.50** FYI Daily **2.55 Film:** Rumour Has It (2005) **3.55** Mr Bean **5.05 Film:** Despicable Me (2010) **6.05** FYI Daily **6.10 Film:** Despicable Me (2010) **7.00** Scorpion **8.00 Film:** Evan Almighty (2007) **9.00** FYI Daily **9.05 Film:** Evan Almighty (2007) **10.00** Family Guy **10.30** Celebrity Juice Live **11.35** Family Guy **12.30** American Dad! **2.00** (BST) American Dad! **2.25** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.50** Teleshopping **5.50** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3

11.35 Inspector Morse **1.50** Hans Christian Andersen: My Life as a Fairy Tale **3.35** Rosemary & Thyme **4.40** A Touch of Frost **7.00** Midsomer Murders **9.00** Lewis **11.00** Rising Damp Forever **12.00** Wycliffe **2.05** (BST) ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4

11.00 The Big Fish Off **12.00** Fishing Impossible **1.00** Pawn Stars **1.30** ITV Racing Live from Newbury and Kelso. Coverage of today's race meetings at Newbury and Kelso. **4.00** Pawn Stars **6.15** Fierce **7.25** World Cup Qualifier Live. Portugal v Hungary (Kick-off 7.45pm). **10.00** An Audience with Billy Connolly **11.05 Film:** Assassins (1995) **12.10** FYI Daily **12.15 Film:** Assassins (1995) **2.45** (BST) ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping

E4

12.00 Black-ish **1.00** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **2.00 Film:** Addams Family Values (1993) **4.00** The Goldbergs **5.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00 Film:** Prometheus (2012) **11.30** Gogglebox **12.35** Bizarre ER **2.35** (BST) Rude Tube **3.35** The Goldbergs **4.00** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **4.45** Melissa & Joey **5.05** Revenge

Film4

1.00 Paddington (2014) **2.50** City of Ember (2008) **4.40** Brewster's Millions (1985) **6.45** School of Rock (2003) **9.00** This Is England (2006) **11.05** Dead Man's Shoes (2004) **12.45** Daredevil (2003) **3.55** (BST) Close

SUNDAY'S TV MARCH 26

CHOICE

Thandie Newton

Line of Duty (BBC1, 9pm)
New series. Thandie Newton stars in the fourth instalment of the crime drama as a detective on the trail of a serial killer. She is determined to catch the culprit as soon as possible and prove her worth to her superiors – but a colleague fears her efforts may have led to a miscarriage of justice, and alerts the AC-12 team to the situation. Jason Watkins, Lee Ingleby, Adrian Dunbar, Vicky McClure, Simon Millar, Elva Trill and Frank Cannon also star.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Flog It! (R) **2.15** Countryfile Spring Diaries. (R) **3.00** Escape to the Country. (R) **4.00** Songs of Praise. **4.35** Shop Well for Less? (R) **5.35** The Best of Red Nose Day.

6.35 BBC News.

6.50 Regional Programme.

7.00 Countryfile. This week's show comes from Denbighshire, where Matt baker meets one of the country's most successful sheep farmers while Ellie Harrison observes the spring mating rituals of grouse and goes in search of adders on the moorland. Sean Fletcher meets an artist who makes edible flowers, Adam Henson visits a college in Cumbria that provides a sheepdog training course, and Tom Heap examines the future of British farming. Including weather for the week ahead.

8.00 Antiques Roadshow. Fiona Bruce presents the show from Burton Constable Hall near Hull, which is home to a collection of treasures. Objects brought in to be valued include a ship's anchor that was found in a garden pond, a medal awarded to sailor for helping to recover Captain Scott's ship from the Antarctic in 1901, some 17th-century flat pack furniture, and a flimsy booklet that proved to be a profitable investment.

9.00 Line of Duty. New series. A detective is determined to bring a serial killer to justice and prove herself to her superiors – but her efforts may have led to a miscarriage of justice.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 Film: Iron Man 3. (2013) The armoured avenger hunts for the mastermind behind an untraceable series of bombings, despite being cut off from his usual resources and traumatised by a recent brush with death. His search uncovers a secret conspiracy involving a drug that renders the user indestructible. Superhero adventure sequel, starring Robert Downey Jr.

12.30 The Celebrity Apprentice USA. **1.50** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.55** BBC News.

BBC2

6.45 An Island Parish. (R) **7.15** Around the World in 80 Gardens. (R) **8.15** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.45** Countryfile. (R) **9.45** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.15** Nigel Slater: Eating Together. (R) **11.45** Simply Nigella. (R) **12.15 Film:** The Importance of Being Earnest. (1952) Oscar Wilde comedy, starring Michael Redgrave. **1.45** Holiday of My Lifetime with Len Goodman. (R) **2.15** Money for Nothing. (R) **3.00** The House That £100K Built. (R) **4.00** Back to the Land with Kate Humble. (R) **5.00** Athletics.

6.00 Inside the Factory: Bicycles. Gregg Wallace explores the largest bicycle factory in Britain which produces 150 folding bike every 24 hours and joins a multi-stage manual production line to make his own bicycle. Meanwhile Cherry Healey gets some tips from Cycling Team GB to help us all improve our pedal power, including how lowering your body position can make a 10 per cent improvement to speed and efficiency. And historian Ruth Goodman reveals that folding bikes date back to the 1870s, and how 70,000 folding "parabikes" were manufactured during the Second World War, some of which played a role in the D-Day landings. (R)

7.00 Robot Wars. Dara O Briain and Angela Scanlon present the next stage of the contest, with robots Supernova, Frostbite, Wyrm, High 5, Crushtacean, Ironside 3, Pulsar, and Apex battling it out.

8.00 Top Gear. Chris Harris and Matt LeBlanc compete in a race across the Arabian peninsula, pitting a Bugatti Chiron against an assortment of other ways of travelling – with money no object.

9.00 Turkey with Simon Reeve. The first of two programmes in which the presenter explores the country that lies at the crossroads between Europe and Asia, and discovers the dramatic changes it is undergoing.

10.00 Film: Cold in July. (2014) Premiere. A man finds his life descending into chaos after being hailed as a hero for shooting a burglar in his home. Crime thriller, starring Michael C Hall.

11.45 Live at the Apollo. (R)

12.15 Film: Night Train to Lisbon. (2013) **2.00** Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) **3.00** Holby City. (R) **4.00** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Bottom Knocker Street. **6.10** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.25** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Sooty. (R) **6.55** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.00** Oddbods. (R) **7.05** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Ultimate Spider-Man: Web Warriors. **8.20** Scrambled!: Horrid Henry. (R) **8.45** Scrambled!: Teen Titans Go! **9.05** Scrambled!: Adventure Time. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Countrywise: Guide to Britain. (R) **10.00** Peston on Sunday. **10.55** Wild Australia with Ray Mears. (R) **11.25** All Star Family Fortunes. (R) **12.10** ITV News; Weather. **12.15** The Voice UK. (R) **2.05 Film:** Dr No. (1962) James Bond spy thriller, starring Sean Connery. **4.15** ITV News; Weather. **4.25** Live World Cup 2018 Qualifier. England v Lithuania (Kick-off 5.00pm).

7.30 You've Been Framed! Gold. Harry Hill narrates a comical selection of mishaps filmed by viewers, featuring everything from giddy grandmas, cute kids and crazy animals to below-the-belt mishaps, practical jokers and painful-looking accidents. (R)

8.00 Vera. The detective is drawn into Newcastle's underworld to discover the identity of a murder victim found dead in the river, with no clue as to who he is apart from a distinctive drugs wrapper. She discovers the dead man had ties to some very dangerous people, many of whom may have wanted him dead, while a witness's testimony links the case to a remote farm where a murder took place 13 years previously. The connection brings Kenny's past back to haunt him, as he was responsible for seeing the perpetrator convicted.

10.00 ITV News; Weather.

10.15 World Cup Qualifier Highlights. England v Lithuania. Action from the Group F clash between the countries at Wembley Stadium, where the teams played each other for the first time in this campaign.

11.30 The Nightly Show Best Bits.

12.00 Premiership Rugby Union. Action from the 18th round of fixtures. **12.55** Jackpot247. Interactive gaming. **3.00** The Cube. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. Text-based information service. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. Guests air their differences. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.00 Kirstie's Vintage Gems. (R) **6.15** The King of Queens. (R) **6.40** Cycling: The Pioneer. **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** The Simpsons. (R) **1.00** The Simpsons. (R) **1.30** The Simpsons. (R) **2.00** Formula 1 Australian Grand Prix Highlights. **4.40** The Restoration Man. (R) **5.45** Location, Location, Location. (R)

6.40 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Our Guy in China. Guy Martin explores Beijing, ignoring the tourist traps and following his own passions as he reveals a lesser-seen side of China. He meets families who live on a scrapyard and earn their livings by processing old cars and spends an afternoon helping out by operating the cranes and machinery, before visiting the hub of the market for rare and exotic supercar sales and assists in the building of what will be the tallest building in Beijing, the China Zun skyscraper. (R)

8.00 Rivers with Jeremy Paxman. The presenter travels along the Thames from its source in Gloucestershire to the Kent and Essex marshes, and delves into its history as a working river going back to the time of the Domesday Book. He meets people who maintain the river's locks and bridges, and work to manage flooding and deal with sewage. Last in the series.

9.00 Homeland. Carrie catches a break, Keane makes a plan and Max goes undercover. Drama, starring Claire Danes, Rupert Friend and Elizabeth Marvel.

10.05 Gogglebox. Capturing the households' instant reactions to what they are watching on TV from the comfort of their own sofas. (R)

11.00 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown. With Claudia Winkleman, Johnny Vegas, Reginald D Hunter and Sara Pascoe. Last in the series. (R)

12.00 Film: Grease 2. (1982) Musical sequel, starring Michelle Pfeiffer. **2.00** UK's Best Place to Live. Sarah Beeny reveals the United Kingdom's most desirable place to live. (R) **2.55** Great British Buildings: Restoration of the Year. Kevin McCloud and Anna Keay visit buildings up for the Restoration of the Year award. (R) **3.50** Building the Dream. **4.45** Kirstie's Vintage Gems. (R) **5.05** Fifteen to One. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.10** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **6.15** Milkshake! Bop Box. (R) **6.20** Paw Patrol. (R) **6.30** Bob the Builder. (R) **6.45** Fireman Sam. (R) **6.55** Rupert Bear. (R) **7.05** Olly the Little White Van. **7.10** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **7.25** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **7.35** Little Princess. (R) **7.50** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.05** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.30** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **8.50** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.00** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.25** Peppa Pig. **9.40** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.50** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **10.00** Digby Dragon. (R) **10.10** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **10.45 Film:** The Princess Bride. (1987) Comic fantasy adventure, starring Cary Elwes. **12.35 Film:** The Wizard of Oz. (1939) Musical fantasy, starring Judy Garland. **2.35 Film:** The Parent Trap. (1998) Comedy remake, starring Lindsay Lohan. **5.00 Film:** Dirty Dancing. (1987) Romantic drama, with Patrick Swayze and Jennifer Grey.

6.55 5 News Weekend.

7.00 Film: Michael Jackson's This Is It. (2009) Documentary following rehearsals for the singer's planned 50-night series of concerts at London's O2, immediately before his untimely death in 2009. Featuring interviews with Jackson, performances of classic hits including Billy Jean and Wanna Be Startin' Something, and an insight into the elaborate preparations for the shows that were never staged.

9.00 Michael Jackson: Man in the Mirror. Profile of the singer, following his development from child star with the Jackson 5 to becoming an iconic performer in his own right as an adult. The programme explores his difficult relationship with his family and makes the case that growing up in the public eye had a devastating psychological impact that he was never able to recover from.

11.05 Michael Jackson on Trial. The singer's 2005 trial for child molestation.

12.05 Kings of Pop. Bruno Brookes narrates a celebration of pop music's greatest male singers. **1.00** SuperCasino. Live interactive gaming. **3.10** All New Traffic Cops: Under Attack. An insight into the working life of officers patrolling Britain's roads. (R) **4.00** Criminals: Caught on Camera. Extreme situations. (R) **4.50** House Doctor. A Brixton flat. (R) **5.15** Wildlife SOS. (R) **5.40** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.50** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Revolution and Romance: Musical Masters of the 19th Century **8.00** Stunning Soloists at the BBC **9.00** 6 Music 2017 Festival Highlights **10.30** The Secret Life of Bob Monkhouse **12.00** Timewatch: The Last Days of World War One **1.00** Tank Men **1.30** The Century That Wrote Itself **2.30** How to Get Ahead: At Renaissance Court **3.30** Close

ITV2
2.00 2Awesome: 2Awesome: Third Wheel **2.30** 2Awesome: 2Awesome: LA Story **2.45** Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway **4.15 Film:** Cats & Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore (2010) **5.15** FYI Daily **5.20 Film:** Cats & Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore (2010) **6.00** Catchphrase Mother's Day Special **7.00 Film:** Coyote Ugly (2000) **9.00** Ibiza Weekender **10.00** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.30** The Cleveland Show **1.25** The Vampire Diaries

ITV3
11.50 Sherlock Holmes: The Hound of the Baskervilles **2.10 Film:** Anne of Green Gables (2015) **3.55** Agatha Christie's Marple **6.00** Midsomer Murders **8.00** Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs **9.00** It'll Be Alright on the Night **10.00** Rising Damp Forever **11.10 Film:** Rising Damp (1980) **12.10** FYI Daily **12.15 Film:** Rising Damp (1980) **1.10** Inspector Morse **3.00** May the Best House Win **4.40** On the Buses **5.35** ITV3 Nightscreen

ITV4
1.40 Film: Bend of the River (1952) **2.40** FYI Daily **2.45 Film:** Bend of the River (1952) **3.30 Film:** The Horse Soldiers (1959) **4.30** FYI Daily **4.35 Film:** The Horse Soldiers (1959) **5.55** Fishing Impossible **7.00** The Big Fish Off **8.00** Premiership Rugby Union **9.00 Film:** Ransom (1996) **10.05** FYI Daily **10.10 Film:** Ransom (1996) **11.25 Film:** Fire Down Below (1997) **12.25** FYI Daily **12.30 Film:** Fire Down Below (1997) **1.35** Goodwood Members Meeting **2.30** Hogan's Heroes **2.55** ITV4 Nightscreen

E4
12.00 The Goldbergs **3.00** The Big Bang Theory **6.30 Film:** Iron Man 2 (2010) **9.00** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **10.00 Film:** The Adjustment Bureau (2011) **12.05** Tattoo Fixers **1.05** The Goldbergs **1.40** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **2.35** Gap Year **3.20** Melissa & Joey

Film4
1.00 Rango (2011) **3.05** Sherlock Holmes: Terror by Night (1946) **4.20** Inkheart (2008) **6.25** The Way Back (2010) **9.00** Ted (2012) **11.05** The Stag (2013) **12.55** Crazy Heart (2009)

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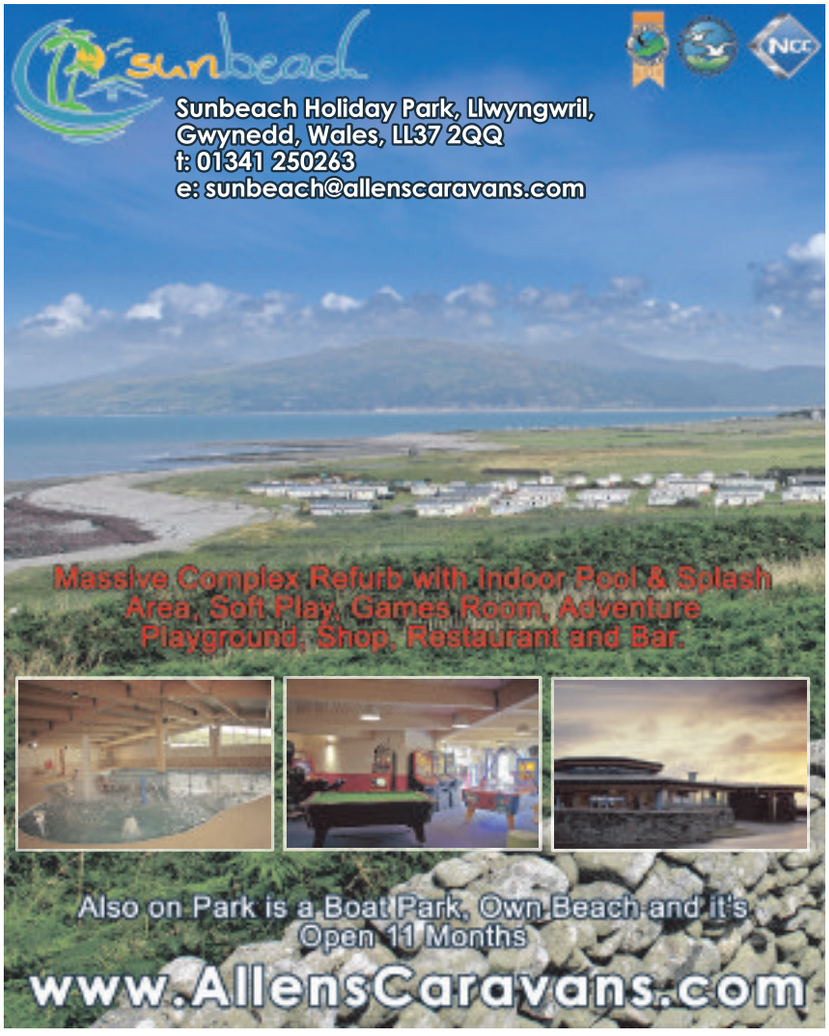

PICK OF THE WEEK

FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
Fury, Channel 5, 11pm
A veteran American sergeant leads a tank crew on one final dangerous mission in the last months of the Second World War. The assignment takes the soldiers behind enemy lines and into battle with overwhelming enemy forces, while the presence of an inexperienced new recruit in the team raises tension. Drama, starring Brad Pitt and Shia LaBeouf. (2014)

TUESDAY
Amish Abduction, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A young Amish woman visits her cousin in Charm, Ohio for the summer, where she discovers another world and finds friendship. But she soon has to choose which life she wants. Drama, starring Trevor Donovan and Daniella Chuchran. (2015)

WEDNESDAY
Michael Jackson's This Is It, Channel 5, 11.05pm
Documentary following rehearsals for the singer's planned 50-night series of concerts at London's O2, immediately before his untimely death in 2009. Featuring interviews with Jackson, performances of classic and an insight into the elaborate preparations for the shows that were never staged. (2009)

Dirty Dancing, Thursday, Channel 5, 10pm

THURSDAY
Dirty Dancing, Channel 5, 10pm
A dance instructor at a 1960s resort hotel fears his career will be jeopardised when his regular partner is forced to pull out of an important show in which they are due to perform. Luckily, a naive teenager is happy to step in, and is treated to a whirlwind holiday education in life, love and expressing herself. Romantic drama, starring Patrick Swayze. (1987)

FRIDAY
Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides, BBC1, 10.35pm
Captain Jack Sparrow sets sail in search of the legendary fountain of youth. His mission puts him up against a mysterious woman from his past, old enemy Barbossa, now in the employ of the British Navy, and the most feared pirate of them all, the dreaded Blackbeard. Fantasy adventure sequel, with Johnny Depp and Penelope Cruz. (2011)

Rio gives a revealing insight into his personal life

Rio Ferdinand looked amazed when he sat down to address academics at Oxford Union a couple of years ago.

He'd spent nights worrying about the content of his speech, wondering if he had any common ground with the students. Then he realised they were all people that excelled in their field.

"I always knew from a young age that I wanted to be the best," he told them. So he set his sights on Man United, and wound up fulfilling his goal. Pun intended.

Fear of failure is what drove Rio on. From West Ham he moved to Leeds United "for a small amount of money" and became captain within a couple of months.

By the time he was playing at the World Cup in Japan, it was clear he'd impressed Alex Ferguson, who decided to take him to Manchester United.

Being an acclaimed footballer was a dream come true for Ferdinand. Little wonder his rags-to-riches story inspired many.

With a successful career and more than a few quid in the bank, he seemed to have it all, including a happy marriage to Rebecca and three kids, Lorenz, Tate, and Tia.

The couple had met while he was playing for West Ham United in the late 1990s. By 2009 they married in the Caribbean, and everything seemed perfect.

Then Rebecca received news that she had cancer; her life expectancy was believed to be between two and five years.

Alas the cancer was a lot more rapid and the family's world was turned upside down in May 2015 when she passed away, aged just 34.

In this moving documentary, Rio meets other families coping with bereavement, and looks at what help is available for parents and children who have experienced loss to move on with their lives.

"I don't think I've grieved properly," he explains. "I've not given myself that time to sit down and really flush everything out and go through it."

Here Rio explores ways of managing grief, including his own, and discovers the only way parents can help their kids move on with their lives is for them to begin to rebuild their own first.

Obviously Ferdinand is not alone; every day in the UK, around 75 men under 50 become widowers. This documentary offers viewers a broader insight into how young husbands and fathers cope with grief as the former soccer star speaks to other bereaved men who share their experiences.

By examining the issues around grief, the stigma men often face in displaying and discussing their emotions, and discovering some of the ways people cope with loss, the film highlights the other obstacles bereaved men have to overcome.

"Rio Ferdinand has courageously allowed the cameras to follow him in this revealing and immensely personal documentary exploring the complexities of grief," explains Alison Kirkham, the BBC's Controller of Factual Commissioning and Events.

Rio Ferdinand: Being Mum and Dad, Tuesday, BBC1, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
The Repair Shop
BBC2, 6.30pm
We're often told we live in a disposable culture, where items are routinely thrown away and replaced, but it seems some people still know how to make do and mend. For this new series, a collection of skilled craftspeople, including furniture restorers, horologists, metal workers, ceramicists and upholsterers have been gathered together in once place to help bring broken or damaged family heirlooms back to life. Most of the objects come with a story attached, including the accordion featured in the opening episode, which belongs to a woman in her 90s who shares her memories of playing it during the Blitz. Other items featured over the series include a Davenport desk complete with fake drawers that fooled a burglar, and a pinball machine that currently doubles as a kitchen counter.

TUESDAY
Stargazing Live Australia
BBC2, 8pm
New series. Professor Brian Cox and Dara O Briain travel to Australia to explore the night skies, with the programme joining them as they finish a long night under the stars and as dawn approaches. Brian and Dara are joined by Liz Bonnin on a remote mountain top in New South Wales, site of the world-famous Siding Spring Observatory, and will have Australian outback-astronomer Greg Quicke as their guide to the southern sky, revealing some of the wonderful star-tales told by indigenous people.

WEDNESDAY
MasterChef
BBC1, 8pm
New series. John Torode and Gregg Wallace return to put 64 more amateur cooks to the test. The first eight hopefuls begin by creating a dish using ingredients chosen from the new 'MasterChef market', stocked full of produce from all over the world, including pork mince, halibut and pancetta. Only five contestants will survive the first round, and the remaining cooks are then challenged to prepare a two-course meal to secure a place in the quarter-final. The amateurs not only have to impress John and Gregg, but also the finalists of last year's MasterChef competition.

MasterChef, Wednesday, BBC1, 8pm

THURSDAY
Galapagos
BBC1, 9pm
Liz Bonnin and a team of boffins are hunting high and low for flora and fauna in this stunning new series. Located on the equator, the Galapagos is an archipelago where evolution has proceeded at a remarkable pace. However, with the climate changing fast, this tropical paradise is under threat. Ms Bonnin and assorted scientists team up for the most ambitious scientific expedition attempted in this remote region. Episode one sees Liz joining the scientific team aboard the research vessel the Alucia on an expedition across the Galapagos Archipelago. The trek starts on the Galapagos' west side at the youngest, most volcanically active islands in the archipelago, Isabela and Fernandina, home to a diverse wildlife scene.

FRIDAY
Unreported World
Channel 4, 7.30pm
A year has passed since decades of military dictatorship came to an end in Burma, and Aung San Suu Kyi began leading a new era of civilian government in the nation also known as Myanmar. However, the woman once hailed around the world is now being criticised for failing to bring real freedoms to many in the country, and the fighting against various rebel groups has intensified. Krishnan Guru-Murthy and director Karim Shah travel to the country to investigate whether its fledgling democracy can overcome such attacks.

Spectacular Spain with Alex Polizzi
Channel 5, 9pm
New series. The hotelier and presenter shares her passion for Spain's culture and people, and makes some new discoveries along the way. She begins in the north east, a region often overlooked by Brits, where she enjoys a luxurious cabernet grape body scrub, and is shown around an astonishing cellar full of ancient wines. Alex experiences the craziness of the San Fermin fiesta.

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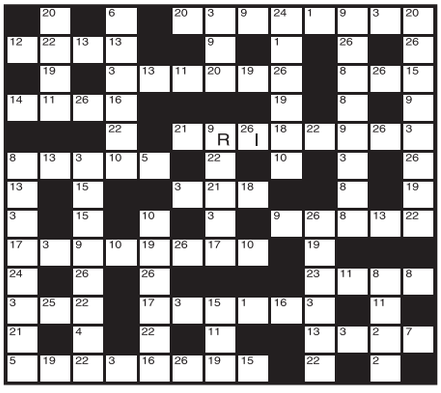
BRAIN GYM No.422

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



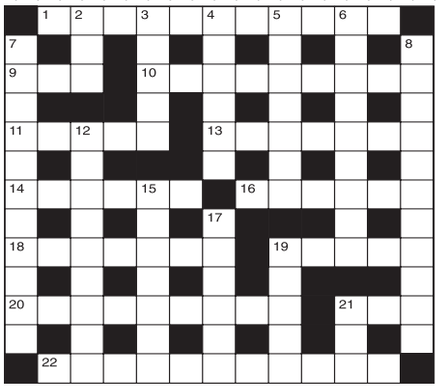
1	14
2	15
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9 R	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26 I

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1 C	2 T	3 W	4 I	5 D	6 M	7 H	8 S	9 K	10 E	11 X	12 O	13 F
14 B	15 J	16 N	17 A	18 U	19 P	20 V	21 G	22 R	23 Z	24 L	25 Y	26 Q

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.



Cryptic Clues:

Across

1. Tool for making two propellers (11)
9. Frosty feeling - small whisky needed (3)
10. Valuer to omit rates, maybe (9)
11. Heavenly world tour! (5)
13. Race methods used by 17 (7)
14. The priests's area is bigger than European capital (6)
16. A shelf with right book (6)
18. Particular one found in different places (7)
19. See 20 Across
20 & 19Ac. In which the last ones are the winners! (9,5)
21. Draw a bond (3)
22. Suggestion for professional appointment (11)

Down

2. See 15 Down
3. Happening to be unruffled near the tee (5)
4. Sentimental old man taking Dorothy a little way (6)
5. Large dilapidated mines with me inside (7)
6. Sets Regan at variance with friends! (9)
7. Need to change navigational instrument inside when surrounded (11)
8. Kind of concrete, as emphasised before! (3-8)
12. Finish in swapping pub employee (9)
15 & 2Dn. The kind of drink one is saddled with? (7-3)
17. Quick transport from Naples (6)
19. Negotiate to give patient attention (5)
21. The end of the implement is missing as well (3)

Quick Clues:

Across

1. Pardon (11)
9. Tavern (3)
10. Life (9)
11. Pale (5)
13. Perform (7)
14. Outcast (6)
16. Bombard (6)
18. Aperture (7)
19. Disburse (5)
20. Worsen (9)
21. Racket (3)
22. Sincere (4-7)

Down

2. Possess (3)
3. Corn (5)
4. Expressed (6)
5. Closest (7)
6. Incite (9)
7. Condemnation (11)
8. Free (11)
12. Herald (9)
15. Excite (7)
17. Disfigure (6)
19. Perpendicular (5)
21. Owing (3)

Sudoku

				8		6		
9	4		1					
			2	6		3		1
3		1			5		8	
	8			9			7	
	7		3		8	1		4
		3		1	2	7		
4					6		1	8
	1	5		7				

Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

6	2	7	1	5	9	4	3	8
5	9	3	6	8	4	1	7	2
8	1	4	7	3	2	6	9	5
4	3	5	2	6	7	8	1	9
1	6	8	4	9	3	2	5	7
2	7	9	5	1	8	3	6	4
7	8	6	3	2	5	9	4	1
3	5	2	9	4	1	7	8	6
9	4	1	8	7	6	5	2	3

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Rose; 3 Sampling; 9 Chatter; 10 Sepia; 11 Infant school; 13 Elicit; 15 Impend; 17 Congratulate; 20 Idaho; 21 Tillage; 22 Dreaming; 23 West.
Down: 1 Receiver; 2 Staff; 4 Arrest; 5 Posthumously; 6 Improve; 7 Glad; 8 Standing room; 12 Adherent; 14 Isolate; 16 Carton; 18 Abase; 19 Hind.
QUICK - Across: 1 Cast; 3 Majestic; 9 Mourner; 10 Sepal; 11 Extravagance; 13 Divide; 15 Fillip; 17 Consultation; 20 Phase; 21 Valiant; 22 Creature; 23 Bear. Down: 1 Commends; 2 Spurt; 4 Airman; 5 Ecstatically; 6 Typical; 7 Colt; 8 Incandescent; 12 Spinster; 14 Violate; 16 Clever; 18 Irate; 19 Epic.

Quiz

1. From where did Amy Johnson take off on her 1930 solo flight to Australia?
2. Who assassinated Jacobin leader Jean-Paul Marat?
3. How is the extinct Raphus cucullatus better known?
4. To which family of instruments does the cor anglais belong?
5. What is the capital of Slovakia?
6. What do the letters AD stand for?
7. Where does the London Boat Race start?
8. What is a quetzal?
9. In which gulf is Prince William Sound?
10. Who is the muse of dance and choral song?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Graham Taylor; 2 Compton Mackenzie; 3 Prussia; 4 Cyprinidae; 5 Gerry Francis; 6 Gary; 7 African stringed instrument; 8 Dachshund; 9 Florence; 10 Swedish.

Niner: CLARINETS

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

74765423 gives an element,
2165423 gives a second element,
84597845423 gives a third element.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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Make a night of it

James Arthur is playing at the O2 Academy in Birmingham next Friday and it would be Impossible not to enjoy a big night out. The Ticket's got the lowdown on where to eat, drink and be merry. . .

Arthur and out – paint the town red before seeing James sing

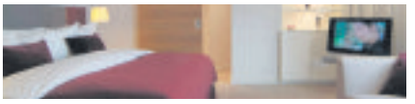
GRUB'S UP

The options are endless when you're in the heart of Brum. We reckon that James would happily head to Chinatown for some authentic cuisine. New Sum Ye in the Arcadian is a great place to try out. The restaurant is all about seasonal food using fresh ingredients full of colour and flavour. Try the crispy duck or the sizzling king prawn. It's a quick and easy pit stop to fuel up ready to dance your socks off and sing your heart out. If you fancy something really cheap, head to Mr Egg which is just the kind of place James would head to before some beers with the boys.

DRINKS ARE IN

It's a student hotspot with a real Indie vibe, so The Sunflower Lounge is the place to go for a few drinks before the gig. There's live music on tap so it's a good way to get you in the mood for the main event at the O2. Enjoy a cheeky drink or two upstairs and if you do fancy listening to some tunes head downstairs. Just round the corner is The Victoria which is a grand old pub with loads of character and a fantastic atmosphere. There are lots of wines, ales and cocktails on tap so it's perfect for getting the evening started in a right royal fashion.

CATCH SOME ZZS



SPLURGE SLUMBER

Go all out and book a room at The Radisson Blu and enjoy sleep time overlooking the city skyline. With its modern and contemporary design it's got serious 'wow' factor for a night away. It's over the road from The O2 Academy on Queensway so within stumbling distance before and after the gig. Rooms cost from £67.50. But you could push the boat out and get a suite with your mates and swan about in bathrobe and slippers while listening to all of James's top tunes from the iPod dock and stereo.

DISCOUNT DEAL

If all you need is a basic bed for the night, spare any expense by sleeping easy at the Hotel ibis budget. It's down the road from the O2 on Great Colmore Street, so you won't even need to get a cab. It offers comfort in simple surrounds with a variety of bed options (twin, double or triple) and there's an unlimited breakfast buffet too. From £35 it's an absolute dream price and you can catch some zzzs knowing you could afford another ticket to see James perform again.

GETTING THERE

TRAVEL TIME

As it's in the heart of the city centre it's easily accessible by car, train or bus. If you do decide to drive in, there are plenty of car parks near to the venue. They range in price from £1 to £5 for two hours. Or you can park further away and walk in. Catching the train is the best option as New Street station is a five to 10-minute walk from the O2 and trains run across the region. Buses into Birmingham come from all areas so if you live close by this could be a good option.

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PROPERTY

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO HOME BUYING AND LETTING

Three-bedroomed detached family home with no chain

DARLASTON £180,000

In an ideal position for easy access to shops, amenities and transport links, 19 Birmingham Street, Darlaston, Wednesbury, is a feature packed period property for sale through Paul Dubberley at £180,000 with no chain.

Full of traditional features this wonderful home has accommodation which briefly comprises of an entrance hall, a lounge, a dining room, a living room, a kitchen, an outhouse, master en-suite, a family bathroom, gardens and off-road parking. Viewing is highly advised to fully appreciate "this wonderfully maintained traditional-style detached family".

In more detail, the entrance hall has a stained glass door with matching window panels, Minton floor tiling and stairs off to the first floor. The lounge has a window to the front, a feature cast iron open fireplace and French doors to the rear opening to the garden.

The dining/living room has a window to the front, wooden flooring, traditional inset storage cupboards and a feature cast iron fireplace. The kitchen has a door to the rear, wall and base units, work surfaces, a stainless steel sink with matching drainer, tiled splash-backs, spaces for a range-style cooker and fridge/freezer, quarry floor tiling and a door to pantry.

The outhouse is accessed via the kitchen, having access to a storage cupboard and guest cloakroom/WC with quarry tiled flooring.

Upstairs is a gallery-style landing with loft access. The master bedroom has a window to the front and a door to the en-suite shower room. Bedroom two has a window to the front, while bedroom three overlooks the rear. The family bathroom has a suite including a free-standing roll top bath, WC, wash hand basin and storage.

Outside, the rear garden is enclosed space having gated access either side of the property, a paved walkway and a patio area, an inset sunken pond and various plantings shrubs, bushes and trees.

The frontage comprises a low maintenance garden area to the front, traditional Minton tiled walkway to the front entrance, parking to the side and hedgerow covering to the front.

KEY FEATURES

- Detached
- 3 bedrooms
- Ideally positioned for commuting
- Traditional features
- No chain

TO VIEW THIS PROPERTY

AGENT: Paul Dubberley
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Unique home comes with permission to build

TIPTON
£425,000

A unique detached four-bedroomed family home set in substantial grounds in Clarkes Grove, Tipton, comes with the added advantage of previous outline planning permission for the construction of three additional dwellings.

It is for sale through Paul Dubberley at £425,000.

It has a reception hall, downstairs bathroom, lounge, dining area, fitted kitchen, conservatory, a downstairs bedroom with an en-suite, three upstairs bedrooms, a family shower room, large rear parking area, brick stores, a carport and extensive front garden.

The property also has a long driveway to wrought iron entrance gates.

For further information, or to book that all important viewing, call 0121 522 3733.

Special five bedroomed home has so much to offer

BEARWOOD
£425,000

Viewing is essential to fully appreciate the accommodation on offer at this detached family home in Adkins Lane, Bearwood.

With five bedrooms, it is for sale through Robert Oulsnam at £425,000 and lies within the heart of Bearwood.

With off-road parking and a garage, its accommodation briefly comprises an entrance hallway, a through lounge, a conservatory, reception rooms two and three, a kitchen, utility shower room, landing, bedroom one, en-suite to bedroom one, four more bedrooms with a further en-suite serving bedroom five and a family bathroom.

The selling agents are expecting a lot of interest in this property. It has a lot of space, making it ideal for an extended family.

Call Robert Oulsnam on 0121 429 9986 or visit www.oulsnam.net

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Traditional and refurbished semi-detached property

A wonderfully and tastefully decorated traditional semi-detached property, 35 Forest Road, Oldbury, has been extended at ground floor level to the side and fully refurbished.

It is for sale through Tom Giles at £249,950.

The renovation included the installation of new uPVC double glazed windows, gas fired central heating, complete re-plastering and the removal of dining room to provide a full-width dining kitchen to the rear of the property having re-fitted kitchen including integrated appliances, island and bi-fold doors overlooking the rear garden.

OLDBURY

£249,950

This stunning three-bedroomed house house is set back from the roadside behind a tarmacadam driveway with parking for two vehicles.

Contact Tom Giles on 0121 552 6171 or visit www.tomgiles.net

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3 1 1
OLDBURY
WOLVERHAMPTON ROAD £149,950
MUST BE SEEN. Spacious end terraced property offering good sized family accommodation well worthy of early inspection. Gas central heating and double glazing. NO UPWARD CHAIN. Popular and convenient location. EPC Rating C

3 1 1
OLDBURY
ST. JOHNS ROAD £134,950
A Mid Town House situated within an extremely popular and sought after location close to West Smethwick Park having good sized family accommodation and Conservatory to the rear, substantial off-road parking and garden to rear. EPC Rating TBC

3 1 1
OLDBURY
ASCOT CLOSE £134,950
A semi-detached property situated in a popular and convenient estate location occupying a corner position with potential for extension to side subject to Planning Consent and Building Control, central heating, double glazing and substantial off-road parking. EPC Rating D.

3 1 1
OLDBURY
BIRCHFIELD LANE £109,950
In need of general improvement, the opportunity to acquire a good sized terraced house situated in a popular and convenient location with the benefit of double glazing and gas central heating. NO UPWARD CHAIN. EPC Rating TBC

2 1 1
OLDBURY
JACKSON COURT, TITFORD ROAD £92,500
First floor flat warranting full internal inspection to appreciate the accommodation being offered. Double glazing and convector heaters. Ideal first time purchase or investment opportunity. EPC Rating D

1 1 1
ROWLEY REGIS
GADDS DRIVE £69,950
Ideal first time purchase or investment opportunity. Ground floor flat well maintained and improved by the current owners well worthy of early inspection. Popular and convenient residential location. EPC Rating D

3 2 1
ROWLEY REGIS
BLACKBERRY LANE £135,000
The opportunity to acquire an extended end of terraced house in need of slight improvement with potential for further extension to the side subject to planning approval. Central heating, double glazing, side garage/store and private rear garden. NO UPWARD CHAIN. EPC Rating E

2 1 1
ROWLEY REGIS
WINCHESTER CLOSE £65,000
A recently re-decorated and well-presented second floor flat within popular location. Communcal Parking. EPC Rating E.

3 1 1
OLDBURY
FOREST ROAD £249,950
A superbly presented and modernised traditional semi-detached house situated within one the areas most Premier locations. Offering excellent family accommodation including dining kitchen with island and bi-fold doors overlooking rear garden and southerly

3 1 1
TIVIDALE
WEST AVENUE £144,950
MUST BE SEEN! Ideal first time purchase. Semi-detached house offering good sized family accommodation situated in a popular and convenient residential location and overlooking Oakham Primary School. Double glazing and gas central heating. EPC Rating C

2 1 1
TIPTON
ANITA AVENUE £114,950
Ideal first time purchase or investment opportunity. Modern semi-detached house with double glazing and gas central heating on popular Tividale Quays Development. Internal inspection recommended. NO UPWARD CHAIN. EPC Rating D

2 2 1
OLDBURY
NEWBURY LANE £104,950
In need of improvement and modernisation and offering an ideal INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY, an extended semi-detached house situated on a corner location with the potential for further extension to the side subject to planning. Conveniently situated for all amenities. EPC

2 2 1
OLDBURY
SHIRLEY ROAD £84,950
Terraced house in need of general improvement and modernisation and in popular and convenient location. Central heating, double glazing, rear garden and outside toilet. NO UPWARD CHAIN. EPC Rating D

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1 | 3 | 1 | EPC C

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3 | 2 | 1 | EPC C

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1 | 3 | 3 | EPC C

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£90,000 Offers

2 | 3 | 1 | EPC E

Willenhall Street, Wednesbury
£110,000 Offers

2 | 3 | 1 | EPC E

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£120,000 Offers

1 | 3 | 1 | EPC C

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1 | 3 | 1 | EPC D

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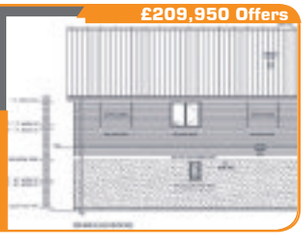

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2 | 3 | 1 | EPC C

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- Off Road Parking
- Garage
- EP Rating E

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Richmond Road, Bearwood

- Ideal First Purchase
- Traditional Mid Terrace
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Two Reception Rooms
- No Upward Chain
- EP Rating D

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Abbey Crescent, Oldbury

- Semi Detached Home
- Three Bedrooms
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- Generosuly Sized Rear Garden
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- Modern Kitchen And Bathroom
- No Upward Chain
- EP Rating E

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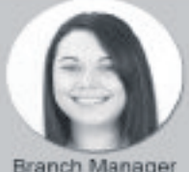

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Pargeter Road, BEARWOOD

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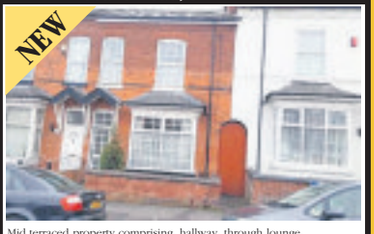
Bearwood Road, SMETHWICK

IDEAL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY!!! Liberty Estate Agents are pleased to offer this mid terraced property comprising, hallway, two reception rooms, kitchen/diner, ground floor shower room, three bedrooms, upstairs bathroom, D/G and C/H where specified, front and rear gardens. NO ONWARD CHAIN!!

Offers Around £149,950

Brisbane Road, SMETHWICK



Mid terraced property comprising, hallway, through lounge, kitchen/diner, three bedrooms, upstairs bathroom, double glazed and centrally heated, front and rear gardens. IDEAL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY OR FIRST PURCHASE!

Offers Around £124,950

Montague Road, SMETHWICK

Mid terraced property comprising, hallway, two reception rooms, fitted kitchen, two bedrooms, loft room, two bathrooms, double glazed and centrally heated, front and rear gardens. IDEAL INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY OR FIRST PURCHASE!

Offers Around £112,950

Kirby Road, WINSON GREEN

Refurbished mid terraced property comprising, two reception rooms, fitted kitchen, ground floor bathroom, two bedrooms, double glazed and centrally heated, front and rear gardens. NO ONWARD CHAIN!

Offers Around £94,950

Bromford Road, OLDBURY

Beautifully presented apartment comprising, entrance hallway, bathroom, two bedrooms (master en-suite), open plan living/ kitchen/dining, double glazing and electric heating, communal grounds and allocated parking. ideal investment or F/T/B

Offers Around £104,995

Saltwells Road, DUDLEY

IDEAL FIRST PURCHASE!! Liberty Estate Agents are pleased to offer this refurbished town house comprising, porch, entrance hallway, two reception rooms, refitted kitchen, conservatory, three bedrooms, family bathroom, D/G and C/H where specified, rear garden, driveway, garage. NO ONWARD CHAIN!!

Offers Around £129,950

Windmill Lane, SMETHWICK

Terraced property comprising, porch, two reception rooms, fitted kitchen, ground floor bathroom, three bedrooms, double glazed and centrally heated where specified, front and rear gardens.

Offers Around £115,000

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Paul Dubberley

PAULDUBBERLEY.CO.UK

GREAT BRIDGE WEST BROMWICH

Bustleholme Lane, West Bromwich, B71 **£310,000**

A four bedroom detached property comprising of a porch, entrance hall, two reception rooms, dining room, kitchen, downstairs W/C, upstairs family bathroom. gardens to front and rear, off road parking and a garage

Marnham Road **£240,000**

A modern end terrace property situated in West Bromwich. The property briefly comprises of having: Hallway, Lounge, Kitchen/Diner, Utility, Ground Floor Bathroom, Four bedrooms (en-suite to master)

Churchfields Way, West Bromwich, B71 **£220,000**

A modern style three bedroom semi-detached property briefly comprising of an entrance hallway, downstairs WC, kitchen, lounge, upstairs family bathroom, front and rear gardens, off road parking and garage

Great Bridge Street, West Bromwich, B70 **£175,000**

A three bedroom semi-detached house, offering an entrance hall, four reception rooms, kitchen, conservatory, downstairs wet room and an upstairs family bathroom, off road parking and gardens to front and rear

Coles Lane, West Bromwich, B71 **£150,000**

A three bedroom end terraced property briefly comprising of an entrance hallway, cloakroom, two reception rooms, kitchen, lobby, W/C and an upstairs bathroom, storage heating double glazing and having gardens to

Hampshire Road, West Bromwich, B71 **£145,000**

A three bedroom semi detached property comprising of an entrance hallway, two reception rooms, a ground floor bedroom with en-suite bathroom. A kitchen, upstairs wet room, central heating, double glazing

Tame Street, West Bromwich, B70 **£140,000**

A two bedroom mid terraced property briefly comprising of an entrance hallway, downstairs WC, lounge, conservatory, kitchen, upstairs family bathroom, gas central heating, double glazing, gardens to front and rear

Grange Road **£135,000**

An opportunity to acquire a spacious 3 bedroom mid terrace property located within walking distance of West Bromwich Town Centre, tram links and major commuting routes.

Turners Croft, West Bromwich, B71 **£125,000**

A very well presented two bedroom modern style mid terrace house briefly comprising of an entrance hallway, lounge, kitchen/diner and an upstairs bathroom, gardens to front and rear and off road parking

Summerlee Road, Birmingham, B24 **£125,000**

A three bedroom semi detached house being sold with NO UPWARD CHAIN comprising of a porch, lounge, kitchen, hallway, downstairs bathroom,front and rear gardens, off road parking and a garage

Farhill Close, West Bromwich, B71 **£130,000**

A three bedroom end-terraced property comprising of a porch, entrance hallway, downstairs WC, kitchen/diner, lounge, upstairs shower room with separate WC, gas central heating, double glazinhg

Ash Drive, West Bromwich, B71 **£120,000**

THIS PROPERTY IS SOLD SUBJECT TO CONTRACT BUT WE HAVE A LARGE NUMBER OF DISAPPOINTED BUYERS STILL LOOKING FOR SIMILAR PROPERTIES!! THINKING OF SELLING??

Harvills Hawthorn, West Bromwich, B70 **£115,000**

A three bedroom mid terraced house briefly comprising of a shared porch, entrance hallway, two reception rooms, kitchen and a downstairs bathroom, UPVC double glazing, gardens to front and rear, garage

Griffiths Road, West Bromwich, B71 **£115,000**

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING WITH POTENTIAL? Well then why not take a look at this traditional style two bedroom semi detached house with a through lounge, kitchen, upstairs bathroom, off road parking and a garage

Arthur Street, West Bromwich, B70 **£110,000**

□p>□b>SUMMARY□/b>A two bedroom end terrace property briefly comprising of a porch, lounge, kitchen/diner, upstairs family bathroom, separate WC, gas central heating (where specified), UPVC double glazing

Wellesley Road, Oldbury, B68 **£95,000**

□p>□b>SUMMARY□/b>A three bedroom mid terraced property briefly comprising of a through lounge, lobby, kitchen and a down stairs family bathroom. The property also benefits from gas central heating (where

Overton Place, West Bromwich, B71 **£90,000**

A well presented two bedroom first floor maisonette comprising of an entrance hallway, lounge, kitchen, bathroom, Economy 7 storage heating, double glazing, communal gardens and a garage en-bloc. NO CHAIN

Creed Way **£79,995**

An opportunity to acquire a well presented 2 bedroom apartment located in a popular residential block just off West Bromwich high street close to tram, road and motorway links, ideal for the city commuter

Old Meeting Street, West Bromwich, B70 **£85,000**

A two bedroom second floor apartment comprising of communal hallways and stairs leading to all upper floors, an entrance hallway, open plan lounge/kitchen, gas central heating, double glazing and allocated parking

Creed Way **£79,500**

An opportunity for the Investor or First time buyer to acquire a well presented 2 bedroom apartment, available with NO CHAIN, benefiting from gas central heating, UPVC double glazing and allocated parking.

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Paul Dubberley

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WEDNESBURY

High Street, Moxley, Wednesbury, WS10
£100,000

A well presented three bedroom terraced family home briefly comprising of, entrance hallway, downstairs WC, living room, kitchen diner, first floor family bathroom, the property benefits from central heating and double

Large Avenue, WEDNESBURY, WS10
£179,950

EXTENDED FAMILY HOME OFFERING four bedrooms situated on a generous corner plot and located in a cul-de-sac, comprising of through lounge, fitted kitchen diner , family bathroom, separate shower room,

Rooth Street, Wednesbury, WS10
£240,000

Beautifully presented semi-detached property having spacious accommodation throughout. A mixture of characterful features and modern fittings have been used to make this exceptional property unique. located

Devon Road, Wednesbury, WS10
£70,000

VIEWING ESSENTIAL to appreciate the accommodation on offer this immaculately presented first floor apartment with secure intercom entry briefly comprising of open plan lounge with fitted kitchen, one bedroom

Cope Street, Wednesbury, WS10
£95,000

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY. DOUBLE FRONTED property in need of modernisation. THREE DOUBLE BEDROOMS and 2 RECEPTION ROOMS. The property offers easy access to BUS ROUTES, M6 MOTORWAY and

Birmingham Street, Wednesbury, WS10
£180,000

VIEWING HIGHLY ADVISED TO FULLY APPRECIATE THIS WONDERFULLY MAINTAINED TRADITIONAL STYLE DETACHED FAMILY HOME OFFERED TO THE MARKET WITH NO UPWARD CHAIN comprising of hall, lounge,

Cobham Road, Wednesbury, WS10
£120,000

A WELL PRESENTED END TERRACE PROPERTY BENEFITING FROM OFF ROAD PARKING & A CONSERVATORY. Accommodation further features three bedrooms, lounge, modern style kitchen & first floor

Bannister Road, Wednesbury, WS10
£110,000

OVER LOOKING THE CANAL this well positioned two bedroom mid terrace property in a cul-de-sac location, accommodation briefly comprises of living room, kitchen, two bedrooms, shower room, front and

Barlow Road, Wednesbury, WS10
£80,000

Three bedroom semi-detached property in need of modernisation. In a great location for schools and transport and offers good off road parking.

Hucker Road, Walsall, WS2
£90,000

ATTENTION FIRST TIME BUYERS offered for sale is a three bedroom property comprising of entrance hallway, lounge, kitchen diner, upstairs bathroom, front and rear gardens, the property benefits from central

Brickhouse Lane South, Tipton, DY4
£61,950

Modern Ground Floor Apartment Ideal for a buy to let investment. Having the benefit of upvc Double Glazing, no upward chain and close to Great Bridge Town Centre. 2 Bedrooms

Toll End Road, Tipton, DY4
£148,500

Large Period Terrace Property, Excellent Size Family Accommodation, Gas Central Heating and No Upward Chain. Viewing Recommended to appreciate the potential and spacious rooms. 4 Bedrooms

Ballfields, Tipton, DY4
£89,950

End Terrace Property having the benefit of gas central heating, double glazing and no upward chain. Ideal Location close to Great Bridge Centre. In need of some attention. 3 Bedrooms

Ferguson Drive, Tipton, DY4
£79,950

Modern Ground Floor Apartment upvc double glazing, electric heating well presented accommodation ideal for a first time buyer or buy to let investment. Good location with viewing recommended. 2 Bedrooms

Bartlett Close, Tipton, DY4
£114,850

EXTENDED Semi Detached - Upvc Double Glazing - Gas Central Heating - Quiet CUL DE SAC Location - NO UPWARD CHAIN - Viewing Recommended. 3 Bedrooms

Eastfield Road, Tipton, DY4
£130,000

Spacious Superbly Presented End Terrace Family Home having the benefit of upvc double glazing and gas central heating. Viewing highly recommneded to appreciate. 3 Bedrooms

Powis Avenue, Tipton, DY4
£127,500

SOLD - SIMILAR PROPERTIES REQUIRED - BUYERS WAITING

Oval Road, Tipton, DY4
£87,950

SOLD - SIMILAR PROPERTIES REQUIRED - BUYERS WAITING

Rugeley Close, Tipton, DY4
£64,950

SOLD - SIMILAR PROPERTIES REQUIRED - BUYERS WAITING

Hudson Road, Tipton, DY4
£107,500

SOLD - SIMILAR PROPERTIES REQUIRED - BUYERS WAITING

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Connells

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WEDNESBURY

Carrington Road, Wednesbury
£125,000

●ANOTHER HOUSE SOLD IN LESS THAN 7 DAYS OVER ASKING PRICE BY OUR OPEN HOUSE EVENT - CALL CONNELLS ESTATE AGENTS YOUR NUMBER ONE AGENT IN WEDNESBURY HOW WE CAN HELP YOU SELL YOURS!● A beautiful mid terrace property, being an ideal starter home. Three bedrooms, lounge, kitchen diner, loft room, off road parking.

Paul Street, Wednesbury
£90,000

●SOLD WITHIN 24 HOURS AND ON THE FIRST VIEWING! GOT A PROPERTY TO SELL? CONTACT CONNELLS YOUR NUMBER ONE SELLING AND LETTING AGENT IN WEDNESBURY● Viewing advised on this well presented first floor appartment. The accommodation comprises: lounge, fitted kitchen, two bedrooms, shower room and study.

Myrtle Terrace Tipton
£185,000

●ANOTHER PROPERTY SOLD IN LESS THAN THREE WEEKS! - STRUGGLING TO SELL WITH YOUR CURRENT AGENT? OR THINKING OF SELLING? CONTACT CONNELLS. ●FANCY RELAXING AFTER A HARD DAYS WORK IN YOUR VERY OWN HOT TUB? - WE HAVE THE HOUSE FOR YOU● A three bedroom detached property on a generous plot which comprises lounge within dining area, study/dining room, kitchen with utilty room, bathroom and shower room, garage and off road parking.

Oakeswell Street Wednesbury
£110,000

●NEW INSTRUCTION - SOLD SUBJECT TO CONTRACT FROM THE FIRST VIEWING BEFORE HITTING THE INTERNET● ●WE HAVE REGISTERED BUYERS WAITING FOR PROPERTIES● Call Connells Estate Agents your number one selling agent if your on the market and struggling to sell or thinking of selling. An ideal starter home within walking distance to Wednesbury town centre. Property comprises two reception rooms, kitchen, bathroom, two double bedrooms, double glazing and central heating. ●ALSO HAVING GREAT TRANSPORT LINKS●

Manor House Road Wednesbury
£120,000

●IDEAL FIRST TIME PURCHASE IN POPULAR AREA● A three bedroom town house comprising lounge, kitchen, downstairs wc, refitted upstairs shower room, generous rear garden, generous block paved area space for off road parking, double glazing and central heating. ●PROPERTY HAS NO UPWARD CHAIN●

Your number one Agent in Wednesbury.

Contact Connells Estate Agents in Wednesbury, your number one selling and letting agent in the town for your FREE market assessment. We offer a 6 week challenge with a no sale no fee policy to sell you're home. Along with that we also offer a wide range of services designed to suit your needs weather it be selling, letting or mortgage advice. For more information call us on 0121 556 2338 or email us on Wednesbury@connells.co.uk

Leabrook Road Wednesbury
£180,000

Connells Estate Agents in Wednesbury are pleased to release a range of four BRAND NEW two bedroom detached bungalows. Accommodation comprises lounge, kitchen, bathroom, two bedrooms, off road parking, double glazing and central heating. Reservations are being taken now

Victory Avenue Darlaston
£125000

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE Connells are now in receipt of an offer for the sum of £125,000 for 75 Victory Avenue, WS10 7RS. Anyone wishing to place an offer on this property should contact Connells, Wednesbury, WS10 9AD, 0121 5562338 before exchange of contracts.

Haden Road Tipton Wednesbury Oak
£150,000

●OFFERS OVER £150,000● ●A WELL PRESENTED THREE BEDROOM PROPERTY ON THE POPULAR WEDNESBURY OAK ESTATE● Viewing advised to appreciate this modernised three bedroom semi detached home, comprising of lounge, kitchen diner, bathroom, generous garden with ample off road parking to front. ●IDEAL FOR FIRST TIME BUYERS●

Woden Road South Wednesbury
O.Over £210,000

●OPEN HOUSE EVENT CALL TO REGISTER - A PROPERTY NOT TO BE MISSED● Ever wanted to own a house on Woden Road South opposite the Duck Pond in Wednesbury? We have a three bedroom extended semi detached property coming to market very soon. This property will sell fast so register your interest now. Do you need help selling your property? Do you need help finding the right mortgage? Do you have a property to let? Here at Connells Wednesbury we offer free advice on the house buying, selling and letting process. Contact us on 0121 556 2338 or Wednesbury@connells.co.uk

Gospel Oak Road Tipton
£190.000

An absolutely stunning new development with this three bedroom home off Gospel Oak Road in Tipton. This high spec family eco homes must be viewed to appreciate the specification on offer. ●HIGH FAMILY ECO HOME WITH SOLAR PANELS● An absolutely stunning modern semi detached property installed with triple glazed windows and under floor heating. Boasting spacious accommodation throughout its a house to be viewed! Comprising lounge, Magnet kitchen, garage to side. ●VIEWING IS ADVISED●

Brunswick Park Road, Wednesbury
£210,000

An immaculate four bedroom detached family home. Briefly comprising of: double glazing & central heating where specified, entrance hall, lounge, kitchen diner, utility, first floor bathroom, four bedrooms, master en suite, front and rear gardens with off road parking. EPC rating D

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Poplar Rise, Tividale

- FOUR BEDROOM DETACHED HOME
- SPACIOUS LIVING
- GARAGE WITH OFF ROAD PARKING
- EPC RATING: B

Guide Price £279,950.00

Ryland Street, Birmingham City Centre

NEW

- TWO BEDROOM LUXURY APARTMENT
- OPEN PLAN LIVING
- SECURE UNDERGROUND PARKING
- EPC RATING: C

Offers in Excess of £224,950.00

Ashes Road, Oldbury

NEW

- FOUR BEDROOM DETACHED BUNGALOW
- MASTER BEDROOM WITH EN-SUITE
- LARGE GARDEN PLOT
- EPC RATING: D

Guide Price £219,950.00

Wellingar Close, Thorpe Astley

NEW

- MODERN THREE BEDROOM TOWNHOUSE
- SITUATED IN A QUIET CUL-DE-SAC
- MASTER BEDROOM WITH EN-SUITE
- EPC RATING: B

Offers in Excess of £199,950.00

Dudley Road East, Tividale

- FOUR BEDROOM DETACHED HOME
- NEUTRAL DECOR THROUGHOUT
- DRIVEWAY & GARAGE
- EPC RATING: C

Offers in Excess of £199,950.00

Baskerville Road, Kidderminster

NEW

- THREE BEDROOM SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE
- TWO GROUND RECEPTION ROOMS
- FULLY REFURBISHED THROUGHOUT
- EPC RATING: E

Offers in Excess of £149,950.00

College Road, Kingstanding

- THREE BEDROOM MID-TERRACED HOUSE
- IN NEED OF MODERNISATION
- DRIVEWAY FOR MULTIPLE VEHICLES
- EPC RATING: E

Guide Price £129,950.00

Charlotte Close, Tividale

NEW

- TWO BEDROOM TERRACED HOME
- NEWLY INSTALLED KITCHEN
- GARDENS FRONT & REAR
- EPC RATING: D

Guide Price £107,500.00

Oberon Grove, Wednesbury

- TWO BEDROOM MODERN APARTMENT
- OPEN PLAN LOUNGE WITH GREAT VIEWS
- MASTER BEDROOM WITH EN-SUITE
- EPC RATING: C

Guide Price £94,950.00

Queen Elizabeth Road, Nuneaton

- TWO BEDROOM COACH HOUSE
- SITUATED IN A QUIET RESIDENTIAL AREA
- CONTEMPORARY STYLE FITTED KITCHEN
- EPC RATING: C

Guide Price £99,950.00

Meadow Brook Road, Bournville

- FOUR BEDROOM SEMI-DETACHED HOME
- IMPRESSIVE RECEPTION AREAS
- EXPANSIVE MODERN KITCHEN
- EPC RATING: C

Offers in Excess of £299,950.00

Old College Avenue, Oldbury

- THREE BEDROOM MODERN TOWNHOUSE
- SPACIOUS LOUNGE/ DINING AREA
- LANDSCAPED GARDENS/ REAR DECKING
- EPC RATING: C

Guide Price £174,950.00

Endwood Court, Handsworth

- THREE BEDROOM FLAT
- SPACIOUS LOUNGE / DINING AREA
- TWO BALCONIES & UNDERFLOOR HEATING
- EPC RATING: E

£99,950.00

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£114,950	Sheridan Street, West Bromwich, B71 4EF
£174,950	City Heights, City Centre, B4 6HW

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Ryland Street, Birmingham City Centre

NEW

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- UNALLOCATED PARKING SPACE

Monthly Rental Of £650.00

Granville Street, Birmingham City Centre

- TWO BEDROOM APARTMENT
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- DOUBLE BEDROOM WITH FITTED WARDROBE
- FAMILY BATHROOM WITH SHOWER

Monthly Rental Of £650.00

Derry Close, Harborne

- THREE BEDROOM SEMI-DETACHED HOME
- MODERN FITTED KITCHEN & BATHROOM
- DRIVEWAY AND GARAGE
- FRESH INTERIORS

Monthly Rental Of £650.00

Hargate Lane, West Bromwich

- THREE BEDROOM DETACHED HOME
- TWO RECEPTION ROOMS
- CONSERVATORY AREA
- DRIVEWAY & OFF ROAD PARKING

Monthly Rental Of £575.00

Francis Ward Close, West Bromwich

- THREE BEDROOM SEMI-DETACHED HOME
- SUPERB LOCATION - GREAT GARDENS
- LARGE, LIGHT RECEPTION ROOM
- LOCAL TRANSPORT LINKS

Monthly Rental Of £550.00

Gladstone Street, West Bromwich

NEW

- MODERN TWO BEDROOM APARTMENT
- TWO DOUBLE BEDROOMS
- ECONOMY 7 ELECTRICAL HEATING
- ALLOCATED PARKING SPACE

Monthly Rental Of £550.00

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5 Business & Farming

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6 Property

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ANY AREA
ANY CONDITION
Terms may apply
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07756 022973
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Home Cash Buyer
Sell today, sign today, complete when u wish
£££ RENT BACK OPTIONS £££
Houses / Land Required
Ring Paul 24/7 Local **07870 341 089**
Sandwell area: Call 0121 696 4154
Walsall & Cannock area: Call 01922 432049
Wolverhampton: Call 01902 489901
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**Includes Most Bills*
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Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme
01902 213121
J9accommodation.com

NOTICE TO READERS It is an offence under the Accommodation Agencies Act 1953, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the registration of your requirements and/or supplying particulars of premises to let.

7 Jobs

building & construction

AMP SCAFFOLDING LTD require Scaffolding Inspector / Scaff Tagger / Handover person. Must be fully carded and hold a clean driving licence. Call 0121 580 0389.

EXPERIENCED DRAINAGE ENGINEER required with clean driving licence. 25 years plus. Tel: Steve or Jackie on 07740 796376.

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GENTS HAIRDRESSER
(Barber required)
Also
School Leaver for
Apprenticeship
Quinton
Tel 0121 422 4104

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CBTC MILLICHIPS - West Bromwich. Full time Commercial / Residential Conveyancing Secretary to cover 12 months maternity leave. Legal experience essential. CVs and covering letter to: sharon.millward@cbtcsolicitors.co.uk

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WOLVERHAMPTON: 15-16 JULY & 16-17 SEPT.
TELFORD: 20-21 MAY & 23-24 OCTOBER

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full time - general

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Salary negotiable

Reporting to the Finance Manager. The ideal candidate will be an experienced or a part/newly qualified accountant. Highly motivated, ambitious and prepared to get involved in all aspects of the company's business. You will be expected to be able to prepare management accounts for the company of circa 14 million turnover. You will be required to interface with all departments at all levels. Previous experience of management accounts, sales, purchase and general ledger control essential. Experience of Microsoft Dynamics NAV would be an advantage.

QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SERVICES ASSISTANT

Salary negotiable

Reporting to the Quality and Customer Services Director. The ideal candidate will have previous experience in auditing quality systems to ISO9001. Good data retrieval skills and knowledge of Excel and Microsoft packages are essential. You will need excellent communication skills to liaise with all departments at all levels. Experience of Microsoft Dynamics NAV would be an advantage

Apply in writing or email enclosing CV and current salary to:
Fiona Bates, Connects2 Ltd, High Street, Princes End, Tipton, West Midlands, DY4 9HG.
Email jobs@connects2.com

Closing date 31.**03.17**

www.connects2.com

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We have pleasure in offering the position of CAD/CAM Engineer. The successful applicant must have at least some experience in 3D Solidworks and or similar and have experience in reading engineering drawings, also be willing to train on our 'Bysoft' CAM programming software. You must have basic word processing skills (Microsoft word etc) as well as an excellent telephone manner.

An outward personality would be an advantage as customer liaison is an important aspect of the position, any knowledge in material specifications i.e. Mild steel Stainless Steel or manufacturing in general would give a good base from which to start. You must be happy to work within a small but extremely busy office environment, be well organized and have an excellent attention to detail.

The successful applicant will be rewarded with an excellent remuneration package.

For more information and an application form call
Neil Tomkins 0121 520 2444 or email neil@accurate-laser.co.uk

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FINANCE ASSISTANT - x2

Full time - Salary £18,000

Full job description and application form online at

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require

SCAFFOLDERS, SCAFFOLDING TRAINEES & LABOURERS

Training will be provided.
You must be over 18.

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WESTLEY PLASTICS LTD
Cradley Heath

We are currently expanding our workforce and looking for people to cover the following positions.

*** Manual Lathe Operator**
*** General /CNC Machinist**
*** Router Setter Operator**

You must have experience and proven skills to operate/set the machines stated above, be conscientious and have the ability to check and measure your own work with accuracy. If you are able to cover more than one of the above positions this would be an advantage.

We operate a 3 shift pattern.

Salary is £8.50 - £10.00 p.h. plus shift allowance

Please email your CV to
nicky@plasticsuk.com

YARD HAND required full time. West Bromwich area. To work out doors. Must be physically fit. Tel BCR Services Ltd 0121 505 7088, email: bcrservices@btconnect.com

engineering

QUALITY ENGINEER Leading Manufacturer of closed die forgings seeks a QUALITY ENGINEER with hands on experience. Knowledge of ISO/TS 16949 required. Background in petrochemical specifications an advantage. Some metallurgical knowledge preferred. For further details Tel 0121 526 7138.

SKILLED FABRICATOR /WELDER permanent position.Tipton area. Call 0121 520 4960.

8 Motoring

cars over £1500

VAUXHALL ASTRA TWINTOP SPORT

2009, 84,000 miles, silver, fsh, MoT, diesel, 150PS, hard top convertible.

£2,750.

07817 315786.

CONVERTIBLE

AUDI A4

CONVERTIBLE 1.8TS

petrol, manual, metallic silver, full leather, 2003, 98k, MoT, very good condition,

£3,000 ono.

07847 456061

BMW Z4

2003, 2.2L, Petrol, MoT Oct 2017.

100,200 miles, cream leather, alloy wheels, electric roof.

Excellent condition.

£2,600

01543 878977 / 07955 214767.

FORD FIESTA 1.0

Eco Boost 125 Titanium. 63 reg 33,600 Miles. 5dr, met black, abs, electric windows/mirrors, air con, fsh, long MoT, alloy wheels, Sony audio/sat nav.

£8,250

01543 277498

FORD FOCUS GHIA 1.6 PETROL

Auto, 5dr

06 plate, MoT November 17, 47,400 miles, colour tonic.

£1,600.
07972 539234.

4X4

LANDROVER FREELANDER 2 HSE

2007, diesel, 10 months MoT, manual, silver / grey, built in Sat Nav, front and rear heated windows, front heated seats, cream leather interior, all round parking sensors, 127,000 miles, lady owner.

Excellent condition.

£7,000 ovno.

07765 141655. 07814 807885.

MINI COOPER 1.6 PETROL

3dr, 06 reg, two owners 78,915 miles, fsh, last serviced at 77,195 miles, six months MoT no advisories, new clutch fitted Feb 2017, half leather, air con, EW, alloys etc, excellent condition,

£2,595

07977 939497.

VAUXHALL CORSA DIESEL ECO FLEX

5dr, 64 plate, grey in colour, 19,000 miles, one owner.

£4,995.

07966 284902.

cars under £1500

ADVERTISERS ARE REMINDED

that the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires that advertisements must clearly differentiate between Private and Trade.

FOR A QUICK SALE

BMW 320D ESTATE

Black, MoT September 2017, very reliable, 2003.

Quick sale due to new car.

£1,100 o.n.o.

07804 462906

FOR A QUICK SALE

HONDA CIVIC 1.6 ZETEC

5Dr, 2005, CL, alarm, PAS, CD player, 5 months MoT, recent tyres and service, average body work.

£795 or very near offer.
07792 960473
or
01922 861090.

LOW MILEAGE

NISSAN MICRA S

3-dr, 03 reg, in gold. Only 47,000 miles with service history, previous lady owner, 12 months MoT, excellent condition.

£895.
07804 831294.

CONVERTIBLE

PEUGEOT 206

CONVERTIBLE

51 plate, light green, 3 months MoT, good runner.

£750 ono.

07479 664483.

LOW MILEAGE

SKODA FELICIA 1.3 LXi

5-speed, manual.

Excellent condition throughout.

Recent battery and exhaust.

4 new Pirelli tyres.

64,000 miles.

MoT until March 2018,

£475 No offers.

01785 713862.

VAUXHALL AGILA

2004, 45,000 miles, blue, electric windows, air bag, fsh, long MoT, metallic paint, central locking, pas, stereo.

£1,000.

07799 378190.

THIS COULD BE YOURS

VW GOLF FSi S

five door hatchback, 1.6, black, October 2004, one owner, MoT till October, 72,000 miles, radio / CD, good condition.

£600 for quick sale.
SOLD

commercial vehicles

VAUXHALL VIVARO VAN

2011, white, LWB, diesel, ready for work.
£4,995 o.n.o.
01785 241401
or
07890 180217

scrap vehicles

OUR ADVERTISERS are reminded that it is an offence under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to buy scrap cars/metal for cash.

ABC AUTO SALVAGE
WANTED URGENT
Scrap & MOT Failures Best Prices Paid ELV Registered Spares Always Available
0121 557 0800 or
0121 557 0400.
Oldbury Area.

vehicles wanted

CROWN MOTORS guarantee best price for your unwanted cars/vans. 07903 549849, buyer will call.

WANTED Cheap Reliant Robin for spares.
07872 138098.

spares & accessories

crash / repairs / resprays

PORTWAY RESPRAYS

Accident Repairs Cars and Vans

Self Prep Resprays from £250

OLDBURY
0121 552 3133

9 Local Information

public & legal notices

LICENSING ACT 2003
MAJOR VARIATION

Application has been made to Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council to vary a premises licence under section 34 of the Act by Tesco Stores Ltd, in respect of Tesco, STONE CROSS EXPRESS, 247-249 WALSALL ROAD, SANDWELL, WEST BROMWICH, WEST MIDLANDS, B71 3HS. The variation proposes a change and extension to the hours the store can sell alcohol (as indicated below) and also the removal of conditions on the licence.

PROPOSED LICENSED HOURS

Monday	07:00 - 23:00
Tuesday	07:00 - 23:00
Wednesday	07:00 - 23:00
Thursday	07:00 - 23:00
Friday	07:00 - 23:00
Saturday	07:00 - 23:00
Sunday	07:00 - 23:00

The licensing register and a record of the application may be inspected at the offices of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Trading Standards & Licensing, Sandwell Council House, PO Box 2372, Oldbury, B69 3BS between normal office hours except public holidays.

Any representation by a responsible authority or an interested party must be made in writing to the council by 09-Apr-17. It is an offence to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in connection with an application, for which a person is liable on summary conviction to a maximum fine of £5,000.

LEGAL / PUBLIC NOTICES

For convenience you may fax any advertising requirements to
Marie Hogg on
01902 713146
or email marie.hogg@expressandstar.co.uk
(remember to include a name/contact number for confirmation of receipt)

SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
Regeneration and Economy
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

I hereby give notice that Sandwell Council has received the following applications under the planning acts which it is required to give public notice for the reason given at the beginning of each group of applications.

The proposed development does not accord with the provisions of the Development Plan in force in the area in which it is situated.

DC/17/60283	Mr Levine	Snaddon House Coneygree Road Tipton DY4 8XF	Proposed change of use from general industrial (Class B2) to storage and distribution (Class B8).

The Council are of the opinion that the proposal may affect the setting of a listed building.

DC/17/60364	Mr Ian Timings	128A Hall Green Road West Bromwich B71 3LB	Proposed scaffolding for the assessment of remedial works.

Members of the public may inspect copies of these applications at Council House, Freeth Street, Oldbury, West Midlands, B69 3DE (between 8.00a.m. and 5.30p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 9.00a.m. and 5.30p.m. Wednesday and 8.00a.m. to 5p.m. Friday) or via the Council's Public Access website (www.sandwell.gov.uk).

Anyone who wishes to make representations about these applications can do so via the website, or should write to the Council at the above address within 21 days (and 21 days for Listed Building or Conservation Area consent) of the date of this advertisement quoting the application reference number.

MR NICK BUBALO, Director – Regeneration and Economy

SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Borough Council of Sandwell (Ireland Green Road, West Bromwich) (Temporary Road Closure) Order 2017 intends to temporarily prohibit vehicles from proceeding along Ireland Green Road, West Bromwich. Traffic will be diverted via Gads Lane, Beechwood Road, Hazelbeech Road and vice-versa. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work necessitating a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order is expected to be completed by 28/04/17, effective from 10/04/17. Purpose – gas main renewal works by Balfour Beatty for National Grid Gas.

The Borough Council of Sandwell (Windmill Lane, Smethwick) (Temporary One-Way Operation No.2) Order 2017, intends to temporarily prohibit any vehicles from proceeding along Windmill Lane, Smethwick between the entrance to the Windmills Shopping Centre and Cape Hill other than in a northerly direction. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work is expected to be completed by 09/04/17, effective from 09/04/17. Alternative route for south bound vehicles via Grove Lane and Cape Hill. Purpose – work to a T-Mobile phone mast by Blade Access.

The Borough Council of Sandwell (Brunswick Park Road, Wednesbury) (Temporary Road Closure) Order 2017 intends to temporarily prohibit vehicles from proceeding along Brunswick Park Road, Wednesbury between Crankhall Lane and Park Hill. Traffic will be diverted via Wood Green Road, Woden Road East, Crankhall Lane and vice-versa. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work necessitating a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order is expected to be completed by 06/04/17, effective from 06/04/17. Purpose – works to a mobile phone mast necessitating the use of a cherry picker by Nationwide Platforms for Vodafone.

The Borough Council of Sandwell (Hope Road and Underhill Road, Tipton) (Temporary Road Closures) Order 2017 intends to temporarily prohibit vehicles from proceeding via Hope Road and Underhill Road, anticipated dates: Hope Road – No.13 to Mount Road – 24/04/17 to 01/05/17; Hope Road – No.32 to Underhill Road – 01/05/17 to 12/05/17. Traffic will be diverted via Underhill Road, Horseley Road, Moat Street and vice-versa. Underhill Road – in its entirety – 15/05/17 to 26/05/17. Traffic will be diverted via Horseley Road, Moat Street, Hope Road and vice-versa. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work necessitating a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order is expected to be completed by 26/05/17, effective from 24/04/17. Purpose – gas main renewal scheme by Balfour Beatty for National Grid Gas.

10 Personals

personal

Angels
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01922 635544

ATTRACTIVE lonely Female seeking broadminded males within a 20 mile radius. 01902 489 181.

ATTRACTIVE, PROFESSIONAL LADY, 50's

Interests include dining out / in, sight seeing, walking days out, travel.

Seeking professional gent 5ft 9 or over, GSOH, to enjoy the good things in life.

Gnosall / Stafford area, surround Villages.

Box Number P20741, Express and Star, Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

general

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IN PERSON - At your local Express & Star office

*SOURCE: Jicreg 01.10.2012. Private advertisers only.

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01902 317878

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Express & Star

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Try it.. You'll love it!

Dates in ***YOUR*** region

Here's how to use your dating service ...

To ***Place*** your advert call:

0844 381 5936

follow the simple instructions. You will also get ***£10 SMS CHAT CREDIT***

To ***Place*** your ad by text

Simply text **REG** followed by your first name, date of birth, area and your advert (max 155 characters) and send to **80098** **FREE** Standard Network rates apply.

YOU can now ***Date ONLINE*** or via your mobile just visit**:**

http://dating.expressandstar.com

To ***Reply*** to members call:

0906 500 3955

calls cost £1.55 per min plus your phone company's access charge.

Have the adverts 6-digit box no written down and do ***key-it-in promptly*** when asked. Don't forget to leave contact details for replies.

To ***Reply*** by text:

Text... **REPLY26** (leave space) box number (leave space) and then enter your message & send to **80098** eg: **REPLY26** 123456 **hi get in touch...** then send to **80098** Successfully received messages cost £1.50 per SMS received (Max 160 characters). You must exchange 7 messages each before you can swap contact details. Messages may be moderated for your safety and security.

Been left a message? ***Pickup*** your replies on:

0906 500 3957

calls cost £1.55 per min plus your phone company's access charge.

THE biggest UK on-line database of 17 million UK REAL users waiting to meet ***you.. visit..*** **http://dating.expressandstar.com**

Single Women

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

KAREN, 46, witty female who loves to laugh, WLTM similar male to share interests, romance, cosy nights in and more. Pls call. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426335**

KATIE 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+ Must be discreet, married or single. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3003 Box 419673**

BROWN eyed female, 66, smoker, likes music, cinema, theatre, meals out WLTM male 67-74 for LTR. **Text only. Mailbox: 5806373**

JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. **Tel: No: 0906 515 3011 Box: 409715**

LOUISE, 40s, youthful looking female looking for spontaneous male to put some love and lust back into my life. Call me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426321**

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. **Tel: 0906 515 3019 Box: 413399**

FARMERS daughter, 69, single, likes heavy horses, animals, meals out, GSOH, friendship only, 65-75. **Text only. Mailbox: 5799589**

EMILY, mature well educated lady, blonde and smart and broadminded seeks gent any age for no strings fun. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3023 Box 421375**

CHRIS, 40, attractive slim sophisticated redhead, seeking male 30-50's to relax with and get to know. Discretion assured. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426301**

TAMIKA, mature black beauty, hourglass figure and open minded. Pls call if you are discreet, broad minded and nice. I can travel and accommodate. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3007 Box 422365**

JAN, 46, lonely divorced romantic female, brown hair, green eyes, curvy feminine figure, employed, OHAC, WLTM attentive male for TLC. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426255**

CARLY, 34yrs, attractive and discreet military wife seeks no strings fun with respectable gent. **Tel: 0906 515 3039 Box 424419**

PAM, 40, cuddly feminine young looking female, OHAC, financially secure, looking for fun times without complications with likeminded male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426253**

ATTRACTIVE well educated lady, mid 30's, solvent, professional, seeks discreet broad minded gent. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3043 Box 425891**

MATURE lady 70s, various interests but a bit lonely, hoping to meet a gent to cheer me up, come on, we can have some fun together. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426349**

SAMANTHA, 35yrs, attractive brunette with own business, seeks adventurous gent for casual relationship. **Tel: 0906 515 3035 Box 425979**

GENTS, please call me if you are looking to meet a kind sincere lady for nights at the theatre, socialising etc. You can call or text me. I promise to reply, I'm very genuine. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426345**

RAPID MATCH
Simply tell us your age and location and we will match you immediately!
TEXT LOVE to 89990
or call 0906 500 5757
0906 rate £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge 89990 cost £1.50 per msg. To STOP text stop to 89990. Service provided by JMediauk Ltd RH16 3EG For Help call 0207 720 7130

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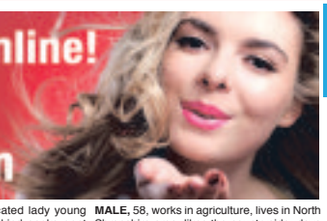

MELINDA, 52yrs, attractive and broad minded seeking chap any age for some fun. Couples also. **Text only Mailbox: 4131946**

JACKIE is 54yrs and an attractive easygoing brunette, she's hoping to meet a similar minded chap for some fun, dates, chats, text or call me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426343**

JOSIE, sexy black lady, 52yrs seeks adult times with concerning gent, any age, discreet clean, womanly figure. **Text only Mailbox: 4028592**

ATTRACTIVE blonde lady, 54yrs, loyal, romantic and solvent hoping to meet a gent with GSOH for romance, sensual times and more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426341**

ANNABELLE, sophisticated 28yrs hoping to meet older gent for adult fun, discreet, sincere, genuine advertiser. **Text only Mailbox: 4157105**

CAROLINE, attractive mature lady, various interests, hoping to meet a smart gent for socialising, perhaps leading to something more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426347**

KEEP DATING SIMPLE!
NO PROFILES TO FILL OUT
NO APPS TO DOWNLOAD
NO CREDIT CARDS
JUST STRAIGHT FORWARD AND SIMPLE DATING. IT'S NEVER BEEN EASIER!
TEXT MATCH TO 89990
All messages received £1.50. Text STOP to 89990 to exit at any time Minimum 7 messages must be sent before contact details can be exchanged This service is not computer generated. Messages are responded to by realservice users. No meetings can be guaranteed. If arranging a meeting be sure to chose a public space and do not give personal details to people you have not met. Service provided by No Goats Ltd. Help: 0207 720 7130 or email: support@jmedia.co.uk

SUE, 38, petite blonde, curvy size 8, outgoing, cultured, enjoys cosy night cuddles, seeking discreet loving male to make me feel special. Status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426219**

SARA, 43, educated independent attractive female, nervous about dating through advertising, so pls don't disappoint me by not replying. I promise I wont disappoint you! **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426161**

JANINE 40yrs, very cute petite artistic female who has a real passion for life, WLTM similarly passionate male for tactile LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426125**

JANE, attractive and young looking 60 something lady, active, outgoing with interesting personality, hoping to meet a kind gent for occasional meetings. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425931**

CHLOE pretty single female 36yrs, dark hair/eyes, slim build, very lonely and looking for reliable discreet male for mutual companionship maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426079**

KELLY young attractive vivacious 48yr old lady, loves good food, cosy nights in/out, holidays etc, WLTM male for mutual companionship without ties. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425913**

BROWN eyed Brummie female, 66, smoker, likes music, cinema, theatre, meals out, WLTM male 67-74 for LTR. **Text only. Mailbox: 5780679**

KELLY young attractive vivacious 48yr old lady, loves good food, cosy nights in/out, holidays etc, WLTM male for mutual companionship without ties. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425913**

EILEEN mid 60s seeks gent 50s-60s for friendship, possibly much more. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425341**

DONNA naughty 40's, pretty, loves nights in, gym, theatre, seeks someone to make me laugh, give lots of cuddles and go on fun dates. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425867**

DAWN 33yr old female looking for companionship with understanding, non-jealous male 35-55yrs. Status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425849**

KAREN, 52, 5ft5, short browny/blond hair, green eyes, medium build, GSOH, loving, caring and kind, likes to do lots of things, likes a laugh, WLTM similar gent, hope to hear from you soon! **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425917**

ANETTA, black cuddly lady seeks man who knows what a woman needs. I'm very friendly and have time for you. Please call or text me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425933**

GILLY, slim petite lady, affectionate and loving, solvent with own home, hoping to meet gent, must be kind, looks unimportant. ACA/text answered. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425929**

MERRY widow seeks lovely lonely gent for companionship. Please call, we can have a chat and see how we get on. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425927**

AMANDA, slim blonde, 50s seeks discreet gent for special times, mutually beneficial to us both. Call now. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425327**

SARA, 43, educated, independent, attractive female, nervous about dating through advertising, so pls don't disappoint me by not replying. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425703**

BROWN eyed female, 66, smoker, likes music, cinema, theatre, meals out, WLTM male 67-74 for LTR. **Text only. Mailbox: 5501142**

JEAN, 40, 5ft slim, busty blonde, new to dating and fed up of going through the pub scene, WLTM down to earth male for adult company. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425671**

MICHELLE, 34, blonde blue-eyed happy female, loves heels and being feminine, OHAC, self sufficient, looking for male for long-term romance and more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425669**

FEMALE, 66 yrs old, looks young, loves to laugh, n/s, who is genuine, caring and just wants to be loved again. **Text only. Mailbox: 5750819**

MARIE, very attractive curvy widow, longing for romance, seeking country-loving male with old-fashioned values for lots of TLC. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425599**

SUE 38yrs enjoys most things, meals in/out, easygoing, broadminded, passionate, slightly feisty, looking for adult fun, call me if you're interested in spicing things up. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425587**

ROZ, 43, tactile, sensual, loves to dress up, and wear heels, seeks genuine caring male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425597**

KATHY 37, gorgeous mixed race single female, 5ft 8ins, slim, sensual, just looking for kind, trustworthy guy any age, looks or race. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425589**

JACKIE, 56yrs, attractive lady who is lots of fun seeks like-minded gent for nights in, days out and much much more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424491**

SUE, 60s lady, calling all gents who seek a mature solvent stylish lady, I can wine and dine you, you will have a nice time, call or text me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424781**

JAN 41, fed up of sitting at home every weekend watching TV alone. Feel the same and looking for love? please contact me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425497**

STACY 28yr old gorgeous brunette with buxom figure, intelligent and sensual, WLTM genuine male to get to know for fun dates and more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425457**

SARAH, 41, dizzy blonde, blue eyes, loves to dance seeks affectionate, hunky, fun male to make her laugh and brighten up her day. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425413**

YOUNG looking Indian female, 40, enjoys meals in/out, good company and conversation, looking for likeminded male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425493**

VIKKI 32yr old active female, confident, fit, loves night outs, looking for similar assertive male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425453**

SUE, attractive genuine lady, own home, loves to spoil a man, give me a call or text. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424673**

WANTED gent 50-76 for cosy nights in, good times, call or text me, you won't be sorry. I'm attractive and have lots to offer. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425339**

CAROL petite brunette, 38yrs, romantic, affectionate, outgoing, seeks similar sensual male for nice times together. Any age/looks. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425395**

LADY, looking for a mature, caring, loving gentleman, 55-70, to enjoy the finer things of life with and to be my best friend. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425308**

JEAN, mature lady, genuine with many hobbies, slim, blonde and attractive. WLTM interesting gent with GSOH, must be cheerful, looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424675**

KATHERINE, 28, tall, slim, dark, blue eyed female with many interests, OHAC, WLTM interesting male for dates, and more. Single dad welcome. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425287**

TRACY, 41, outgoing sun worshiper, OHAC, employed, looking for her Prince Charming to enjoy romantic holidays and good times together. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425257**

SHARON 36yr old single mum looking for loving guy who will appreciate me and help repair my broken heart. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425283**

SHELLEY slim N/S 40's female who likes the simple things in life so no big gestures required, seeking loyal loving male for hopeful LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425253**

SANDRA, smart, sophisticated lady young looking 60s, genuine and kind seeks gent with GSOH, looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424671**

HELEN, mid 50's naughty lady seeks some fun times with gent any age. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424493**

MARY, professional mature lady, loves life, very sociable and fun, seeks gent for good conversation and happy times. All calls and texts answered. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424775**

LINDA, 48yrs attractive brunette seeks gent for laughter, wining dining. Age unimportant. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425337**

LOVING lady, romantic and tactile seeks like-minded gent for special times, lets make each other feel special. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425325**

ATTRACTIVE Caribbean lady 59yrs, very jolly and fun seeking gent any age who must love good times. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425323**

ANDREA, 43, slim with long dark hair, blue eyes, loves to dance seeks romantic man to share intimate moments in or out. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425221**

CAROL, mid 50s lady, young at heart, attractive and sexy (so I'm told)! Give me a call if you are a gent with GSOH. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424783**

THELMA, 59, slim, petite and Afro Caribbean, GSOH, trustworthy, honest and very caring, leave me your details if that sounds good to you! **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425195**

Single Men

SLIM male, blue eyes, dark hair, seeking that special lady. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415697**

I enjoy the great outdoors with the dog, 36 years old, mature with a caring nature looking for a female age 28-48 for friendship, possible relationship. **Text only. Mailbox: 5803493**

CARING male, 6ft, blue eyes, slim, dark hair, honest, loving, down to earth, likes sport, music, cinema, meals out, seeking special lady. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 409803**

MARK, single, 6ft, blue eyes, dark hair, lots of interests, sport, music, cinema, long walks, eating out, looking to meet that special lady. If that sounds like you please get in touch! **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426461**

IAN, 5ft6, looking for somebody, 18-60, for general good fun times, days out, nights out, meals, sightseeing and visiting various parts of the country. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426437**

MALE 45 6ft, blue eyes, dark hair, slim, likes sports, cinema, meals out, seeking loving, caring female to share life with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 406737**

YOUNG 60, West Midlands male, 5ft8, grey hair, wear specs, GSOH, sexy Scorpion, broad minded, slim to medium build, varied interests, seeking a genuine, honest, sexy lady for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426137**

40 year old Hungarian male, 5ft8, slim, dark blond hair, blue eyes, WLTM a lady 30-45 to spend some time together for friendship. **Text only. Mailbox: 5800702**

SOLVENT gentleman, young 70s, loves life seeking a lady of any age to spoil and pamper, take on holidays, wine and dine. Genuine advertiser. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425935**

WILLIAM, young 56, would like some adult fun with a sexy lady, any age, wants and good time and discreet fun. **Text only. Mailbox: 5321154**

MALE, 60s, 5ft10, slim build, looking to meet female, for a mature adult relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426053**

MALE, 58, works in agriculture, lives in North Shropshire area, likes the countryside, days at the coast even in the winter, meals out, looking for loving, caring, country girl, 50s-60s. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426037**

SINGLE male, 31 years old, brown eyes, black hair, 6ft, seeks single slim athletic build lady similar age for fun, hopefully more. **Text only. Mailbox: 4765584**

JAY, attractive, 6ft2, single father, loves a laugh and a giggle, looking for a lady for evenings out, company and maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 424303**

CHRISTIAN, 57, 6ft, dark, likes walking, nice meals and socialising, looking for discreet times with a similar fun lady. If you are interested please contact me. I look forward to hearing from you. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425947**

STEVE, 59, sincere and genuine, likes pub meals, country walks and cinema, seeks Chinese, Tia, Black, Asian or Italian lady, looks unimportant but personality is, for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425831**

I am looking for a lady friend to enjoy my retirement with. I enjoy going out for meals and would like some company. **Text only. Mailbox: 5777872**

CALLING all ladies 40+ who would like to be wined, dined and romanced by attractive gent, 54 years please call or text me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425943**

PROFESSIONAL gent, mid 60s loves holidays, wining dining, shows in London, seeking similar minded lady to romance. Own house car. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425941**

JOHN, mid sixties widower, cultured and interesting, solvent with own home. WLTM lady 55+ for genuine companionship. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425939**

GENUINE single gent, 55yrs, seeks friendship hopefully leading to true love with lady 35-55, looks unimportant. Please call or text me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425937**

ADVENTUROUS 36-year-old male, slim, dark hair, has many interests, seeks female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417235**

MARRIED businessman, mid fifties, seeks lady for discreet adult fun. Any age/looks unimportant. **Text only. Mailbox: 5534019**

MALE, 60, tall and slim, WLTM older female of larger build, any age, any status, for adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425807**

TALL male, 58, seeks larger woman, any age, for discreet fun, married or single. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425643**

GENUINE male, 37, friendly and easygoing, enjoys sport and keep fit, WLTM genuine female 25-45, for friendship/relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420253**

TALL, dark, attractive male, 57, WLTM an attractive female for discreet daytime fun, 25-50. Can travel. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425759**

MALE 65, GSOH, seeks female for friendship and companionship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418389**

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MALE, late 60s, medium build, 5ft10, n/s, car owner, likes meals out, holidays, walks, WLTM slim, attractive female who enjoys similar activities for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425757**

ATTRACTIVE Shrewsbury male, 50s, WLTM an attractive female, any age/status, for discreet daytime fun and excitement, ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 422801**

GARY, 46, 5ft10, blue eyes, GSOH, likes football, quiet nights in, nights out, cinema, walking, travelling, looking for a likewise woman, 35-50, bubbly and fun loving with a GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425441**

I'M Andy, 52, looking for a lady, 50-65, for long term relationship, so text me and lets see what happens. **Text only. Mailbox: 5396692**

MATURE male, 50, medium-build, varied interests, seeks true Christian female, 35-45, who enjoys evenings in and dining out, for friendship or possibly more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419283**

ATTRACTIVE male, 58, seeks adventurous female, 50-70, for close fun. Any status or size. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425535**

DAN 46, easy going chap WLTM a lady 40+ for an uncomplicated discreet friendship with on strings fun. Discretion guaranteed. **Text only. Mailbox: 5595608**

WELL made broad male, 5ft 10ins, medium build, looking for some adult fun with lovely sexy lady, possible LTR or friends with benefits. **Text only. Mailbox: 5321154**

MATURE male, 50, medium-build, varied interests, seeks true Christian female, 35-45, who enjoys evenings in and dining out, for friendship or possibly more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419283**

CHRISTIAN male 51, seeking Christian female, 35-45 for friendship, possibly more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 423747**

MATURE male, 70s, tall, retired, recovering alcoholic, WLTM someone understanding, maybe in the same situation for friendship and mutual support. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425263**

YOUNG looking 63 year old male, GSOH, friendly, considerate, attractive, looking for a naughty female, any age/status, for adult fun and friendship. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425243**

IRISH gent, 66, GSOH, n/s, wishes to meet lady, North Birmingham area, for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425269**

JAMES, 59, 5ft11, average build, WLTM a Christian lady, 60-70, for companionship. Hope to hear from you. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425227**

Gay Singles

Join our Gay online service ***FREE*** visit: ***localgaydate.co.uk***

SUSAN, cross dresser TV, lives in the Midlands, wishes to meet an gentleman, over 65 years of age, for regular meetings, LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 426481**

JONNY, 24yrs, gay curious, not sure what to do, older men pls call me and help me understand. **Text only Mailbox: 4086857**

MATURE bi xd looking for a mature gay or bi male. Cannot accommodate. ATA. **Text only. Mailbox: 4758692**

MATURE bi male, looking for younger company, fun and good times. Can accommodate. Mid Wales. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425127**

BI male 57, seeks similar for discreet NSA fun. **Text only. Mailbox: 4624030**

PAUL, 50, Midlands area, looking to meet up for fun times, maybe relationship with a guy, 25-70, can accommodate. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 425487**

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

Customer support
Call **0207 720 7130** Monday - Friday 10am - 4pm
or email us at **support@jmediauk.co.uk**

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Sandwell Chronicle Thursday, March 23, 2017

The estate version of the Cupra has an impressive boot

Few changes by Seat – but that's not a bad thing

By Darren Cassey

Say hello to the new and mildly improved Seat Leon Cupra 300. There's a small bump in power from 286bhp to 296bhp, but the more noticeable figure is the increase in torque, now 380Nm from 350Nm.

The other major talking point is the move from front-wheel drive to four-wheel drive for the estate – Seat says the system isn't on the hatchback models because of development costs but is probably also partly because VW-owned Seat doesn't want to step on the Golf R's toes. (That's a 296bhp four-wheel drive hot hatch too, after all.)

Elsewhere changes are few and far between, but that's no bad thing because the Seat Leon Cupra has always been a stonking little hot hatch. Dynamically there are some small improvements to the chassis, while the full LED headlights are all-new, too.

As the fun-loving, youth-orientated horse in the VW stable, Seat has long been known for having more interesting styling than its more conservative relatives, something that's continued in the angular facelifted Leon. The Cupra can be specced with bright orange wheels, orange wing mirrors and an orange badge on the boot – imagine a Golf coming with that lot from the factory!

The Seat Leon Cupra 300 is a fun family car

Sporty touches to the Cupra such as half-Alcantara seats help make the Leon Cupra 300 an exciting prospect to drive the second you drop behind the wheel, though. And with the performance on offer it more than delivers. The estate variant offers much improved practicality over the hatchback models thanks to an impressively sized boot – 587 litres with the seats up, 1,470 litres with them down.

Driving down a fun road there's next-to-no difference between this and the three- or five-door models, which makes the estate a more logical choice. It's only about £1,000 more than the hatch without four-wheel drive, which adds another couple of grand to the RRP.

For families looking for an all-in-one, fun family car, the ST Cupra makes fantastic sense. Loads of boot space and plenty of room for the kids makes it ideal for the school run, while the performance on offer means the drive home won't be dull either.

To keep it simple, there's only one engine with one power output. It's a 2.0-litre TSI unit that makes 296bhp and 380Nm of torque. The only variations come in the form of the body styles – SC (three-door), 5 Door, and ST (estate) – and the choice of a six-speed manual or six-speed DSG automatic gearbox.

The engine's an impressive unit, offering more than enough performance for road driving while still being exciting during a brief, stint on track. Its only drawback is a slight lack of character.

In front-wheel drive guise, torque steer is even less apparent than before – despite the hike in power and torque – thanks to the clever mechanical differential used by the Leon to put its power into the road.

We spent the bulk of our time in the four-wheel drive, which offers extra security when accelerating out of corners but is way less characterful than the front-wheel drive version.

Its two-wheel drive sibling is much more fun, much more adjustable and should be the car of choice for keen drivers. Couple this to the mostly excellent DSG automatic and you've got your perfect Leon Cupra.

As can be expected of a manufacturer's performance halo model, the specification is impressive. Driver-focused aids include a launch control mode for automatic, four-wheel drive cars, while the electronic stability aids can be fully switched off if the driver desires.

As a fun family car the Seat Leon Cupra 300 is hard to beat.

DUDLEY MOTOR COMPANY DUDLEY MOTOR COMPANY

2010 10 VAUXHALL INSIGNIA CDTi AUTO 5-dr, Sat Nav, Auto, Full Leather, 56,000 miles £6,495

2007 57 MERCEDES E200K ELEGANCE, Saloon, Auto, Black, 69,000 miles £6,995

2008/08 KIA PICANTO 1.1 ICE Silver, Petrol, Manual, 5-dr, Hatchback, 9,731 miles £4,395

2007 07 JAGUAR S-TYPE 3.0SE Saloon, Auto, Silver, 55,000 miles £5,790

2016 16 ABARTH 595 3500 TURBO 150PS White, 3k £11,495

2015/15 MERCEDES BENZ GLA 200 CDI CLASS 4 Matic Sport Diesel, Auto, 26,000 miles, Grey, 5-dr Estate £24,995

2007/07 VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2i LIFE AC, Silver, Petrol, 5-dr, 27,243 miles £4,495

2014/63 PEUGEOT 107 1.0 ACCESS 3-dr, Red, Petrol, Manual, 3-dr, Hatchback, 40,564 miles £4,750

2014/64 NISSAN JUKE 1.6 VISIA Petrol, Manual, 5-dr Hatchback, Grey, 14,000 miles £9,495

2015 65 VAUXHALL CORSA VXR 1.6 TURBO 3-dr, White, 15,000 miles £13,495

13/13 VAUXHALL ASTRA GTC SRi COUPE 1.6 TURBO, 200PS Silver, 32,000 miles £8,995
13/13 CITROEN C1 1.0i VTR 5-dr, Full MOT, Warranty, Grey, Petrol, 5-dr, 33,910 miles £4,750
16/16 VAUXHALL ASTRA 1400cc ENERGY 5-dr, Black, 5800 miles, Alloys, PAB Radio £11,995
13/63 VAUXHALL MERIVA 1.4 TECH LINE Grey, 16,000 miles, Alloys, Air Con £7,495
13/13 VAUXHALL MOKKA TECHLINE 1.6 Petrol, Grey, 26,000 miles £9,995
14/14 VAUXHALL CORSA VXR 1.6T Arden Blue, 24,000 miles £10,495
12/61 VAUXHALL CORSA SRi 1.4 3-dr, Red, 28,000 miles £5,995
15/65 VAUXHALL INSIGNIA SRi NAV VX LINE White, 8000 miles £14,495
16/66 VAUXHALL CORSA ENERGY 1.4 5-dr, Green, 1500 miles, Air Con, Alloys £8,995
14/14 VW TIGUAN 1.4 TSi BLUE MOTION TECH MATCH 5-dr, 27,000 miles, White £14,495
10/10 RENAULT CLIO DCE EYNAMIQUE ESTATE Red, 36,000 miles, Air Con, Alloys £4,995
12/61 HYUNDAI I30 COMFORT 1.4 5-dr, Red, 34,000 miles £5,995
09/09 VAUXHALL ASSTRA 1.6 TWIN TOP CONVERTIBLE SPORT Grey, 33,000 miles £4,995
15/65 VAUXHALL INSIGNIA 1.6 CDTi SRi 23,000 miles, Silver, 5-dr £12,495
14/64 VAUXHALL CORSA 1.3 CDTi EXCITE 5-dr. Blue, 22,500 miles £8,495
12/62 FORD FIESTA ZETEC 1.2 PETROL 5-dr. White, 19,000 miles £6,495
14/14 VAUXHALL MOKKA SE 1.7 CDTi Orange, 38,000 miles £12,495
15/65 VAUXHALL INSIGNIA 1.6 CTDi SRi Sat Nav, 5-dr, 18,000 miles, Black £13,250
16/65 VAUXHALL MOKKA 1.6 Petrol, 2WD, Black, 17,540 miles £12,650
15/65 VAUXHALL MOKKA 1.6 SE Petrol, 2WD, Black, 14,200 miles £12,995
15/15 VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 2.0 CDTi SRi 7 Seats, MPV, Alloys, 9722 miles £13,495
16/16 VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.4 TURBO SRi Sat Nav, 5-dr, Red, 11,000 miles £13,495
16/16 VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.4 SRi Sat Nav, 5-dr, Silver, 10,000miles £13,495
09/09 NISSAN QASHQAI + 2 1.6 Gold, One Lady Owner, 24,000 miles, 7 Seats £7,995
11/61 VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 SXi 5-dr. A/C, Silver, 34,000 miles £5,995
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13/13 VAUXHALL MOKKA HAT 1.4 140 TBO XDSIV 4X Silver, 37,071 miles £10,450
14/14 SEAT IBIZA 1.4 TOCA 3-dr. Red, 23,897 miles £5,995
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08/57 TOYOTA AURIS 1.6T SPIRIT 5-dr, Grey, 35,000 miles £4,995
16/16 VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.4T 16V 125 DESIGN 5-dr, Hatchback, Grey, 12,800 miles £12,995
16/16 VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.4T 16V 150 SRi 5-dr, Hatchback, Red, 11,500 miles £13,495
13/13 VAUXHALL MOKKA 1.6SE 5-dr, Hatchback £10,995
07/07 KIA SORENTO 2.5 XS AUTO 5-dr, Silver, 60,000 miles £5,995
09/59 MERCEDEZ A-CLASS A160 Blue, Efficienty Avant Garde, 38,000 miles £5,495
14/64 NISSAN JUKE VISIA 1.6 PETROL Grey, 14,000 miles £9,995
11/11 VAUXHALL INSIGNIA ELITE NAV AUTO CDTi 5-dr, Blue, Leather, 57,000 miles £7,995
14/14 VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6 EXCITE 5-dr, White, 36,000 miles £7,495
15/15 VAUXHALL ADAM 1.2 JAM Red, 10,000 miles £7,995
13/13 MINI COUNTRYMAN 'COOPER' Diesel 5-dr. Red, 50,000 miles £10,995
13/63 VAUXHALL ASTRA GTC 1.4 SRi Turbo. Black, 20,000 miles £8,995
15/65 VAUXHALL CORSA 1.4 EXCITE 3-dr, Black, 9,000 miles £8,495
13/13 VAUXHALL CORSA 1.4 SRi 5-dr. White, 32,000 miles £6,650
15/15 VAUXHALL MOKKA EXCLUSIV 1.6 CDTi, White, 10,000 miles £11,495

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Vauxhall launches new Insignia range

By James Parker

Vauxhall's all-new Insignia is on sale now priced from £17,115 on-the-road.

Available as a five-door Grand Sport hatch and Sports Tourer estate, with a rugged Country Tourer estate coming soon, the new range starts at nearly £1,500 less than the entry price into the outgoing line-up.

Range highlights include the all-new 1.5-litre Turbo petrol model priced from £17,115 on-the-road. For Sports Tourer customers, prices start from £18,615 on-the-road for the entry-level estate model. The range-topping 2.0-litre (260PS) 4X4 petrol, another all-new powertrain, is available in Elite Nav trim from £26,455 on-the-road.

One of the highlights of the diesel offering is the 1.6-litre (110PS) Turbo D ecoTEC model (prices start at £18,485 on-the-road) that achieves CO2 emissions of 105g/km. The range includes Design, Design Nav, SRi, SRi Nav, SRi VX-Line Nav, Tech Line Nav and Elite Nav versions.

The new Insignia range offers big savings over key competitors for company car drivers. Thanks to Vauxhall's optimised P11D pricing, the Insignia Grand Sport Design Nav 1.6-litre Turbo D (110PS) ecoTEC saves a company car driver up to £1,983 in benefit-in-kind tax over a four-year/80,000-mile period against a Volkswagen Passat SE Business 1.6-litre TDI (120PS), and up to £1,358 over a Skoda Superb CR SE Technology 1.6TDI 120PS.For fleet-decision makers, the Insignia Grand Sport Design Nav 1.6-litre Turbo D (110PS) ecoTEC provides a whole life cost saving of up to £5,691 versus a Volkswagen Passat SE Business 1.6-litre TDI (120PS), and up to £4,350 over a Ford Mondeo Zetec [Nav] 1.5 TDCi ECOnetic (120PS).Driver and passenger safety are crucial for both company car drivers and fleet managers alike, which is why the new Insignia range gets the Front Camera System and Vauxhall OnStar, as standard.

The Front Camera System incorporates features such as lane keep assist, following distance indicator, forward collision alert, low speed collision mitigation braking and active emergency braking. Vauxhall OnStar gives occupants access to a host of innovative services including automatic crash response; as well as 4G Wi-Fi for up to seven devices, stolen vehicle assistance, vehicle diagnostics, destination download and smartphone functionality.

Each trim level features a high level of standard spec:

For Sports Tourer customers, prices start from £18,615

The new Insignia is on sale now priced from £17,115

VAUXHALL INSIGNIA, FROM £17,115 ON-THE-ROAD

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Design:

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Infotainment:

IntelliLink audio system (seven-inch colour touchscreen, AM/FM/DAB digital radio, Bluetooth audio streaming/mobile phone portal, Apple CarPlay/Android Auto and USB audio connection), seven speakers (five front, two rear)

Safety and security:

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Sandwell Chronicle Thursday, March 23, 2017

The ELX is the only version with the six-speed auto box

SsangYong sales drive is moving into second gear

By John Griffiths

SsangYong is another of Korea's car makers which is increasingly making in-roads into the European car market.

It has a long history of making 4x4 vehicles – including Jeeps for the US military in the 1960s – so with the current surge in demand for SUVs the company has never had a better opportunity. It has responded with the launch of the Tivoli (in standard and long wheelbase versions) which is a strong competitor in the compact SUV sector, particularly in terms of value for money.

Now the larger Korando has had a welcome upgrade, and with prices from £16,250 – admittedly for a front wheel drive only model – it's again the value card which makes it worth a serious look.

The biggest change is the adoption of a larger, 2.2 litre turbo diesel across the range with 178bhp. Like its 2.0 litre predecessor, it's a Mercedes unit as are the gearbox choices – six-speed manual or automatic.

All but the two cheapest versions come with four-wheel drive. It's a "torque on demand" system whereby power is diverted to the back if the electronics detect any slippage at the front. It's more common than the

The interior is capable of accommodating five adults

traditional transfer box system but actually effective on slippery roads (or off them, come to that).

The official fuel average is 53.3mpg (138g/km) for the two-wheel drive versions, and 48.7mpg (152g/km) for the four wheel drive manual.

The test car was the £22,750 ELX, which is the only version available with the six-speed auto box. Official fuel consumption falls to 41.5mppg (I managed 36) with a CO2 emissions figure of 177g/km.

The autobox is fast and responsive so the Korando has no problem tackling the 0 to 62mph sprint in under 10 seconds. It is equally impressive in terms of in-gear acceleration and on the Korando can be switched from eco to power to winter modes at the touch of a button.

Ride comfort and noise levels are improved on this latest model, too. The suspension is, of necessity for off-road forays, fairly bulky and firm, but those familiar with 4x4s of even a decade ago will be surprised by how well the Korando handles on the road.

While in size terms it's not in the Discovery league, the Korando's size, price tag and equipment levels makes it highly competitive when considered against rival SUVs, particularly when in many cases you have to go for a top of the range version to get four-wheel drive at all.

The interior is roomy and practical, easily capable of accommodating five adults and 480 litres of luggage (that increases to 1,312 litres with the rear seats folded). Roof rails are standard, too.

One of the reasons for the Korando's low price is the fact that it's not one but three vehicles – it also comes as a van and a pick-up. But you can see where other cost-savings have been made in the interior plastics although SsangYong has made an attempt to improve the ambience with the use of different shades and textures.

That's not necessarily a criticism as it has some advantages in addition to keeping prices down. For example, if you want a working vehicle, or if you carry dogs, for example, it's an awful lot easier to keep clean.

Rear parking sensors (a camera on the ELX), tyre pressure monitoring, fog lights, LED running lights, front, side and curtain airbags, electronic stability programme, hill start assist and anti-rollover protection are also standard. All versions have power-operated folding (and heated) mirrors, cruise control and a heated windscreen.

All but the basic models have a seven-inch touch screen controller, with Bluetooth connectivity and satnav, atop the centre console and the audio controls are duplicated as thumb switches on the steering wheel. SsangYong has been attempting to make an impact on UK and European markets since the early 1990s, when it signed up to a technology partnership with Mercedes-Benz. It's fair to say it's been an uphill struggle, but with competent and highly competitive new models like the Tivoli and now the latest Korando, it seems like the company's sales drive is now, at the very least getting into second gear.

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ARRANGEMENT FEES	OPTIONAL FINAL PAYMENT	MILEAGE PER ANNUM	EXCESS MILEAGE CHARGE PER MILE	TOTAL AMOUNT PAYABLE	3.7% APR REPRESENTATIVE	INCLUDES VAUXHALL PARTNERS DISCOUNT
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CASH PRICE	DEPOSIT	VAUXHALL DEPOSIT CONTRIBUTION	PART EXCHANGE	AMOUNT OF CREDIT	47 MONTHLY PAYMENTS	INTEREST
£17,005.00	£0.00	£2000.00	£1,000.00	£14,005.00	£199.98	£1,474.06
ARRANGEMENT FEES	OPTIONAL FINAL PAYMENT	MILEAGE PER ANNUM	EXCESS MILEAGE CHARGE PER MILE	TOTAL AMOUNT PAYABLE	3.7% APR REPRESENTATIVE	INCLUDES VAUXHALL PARTNERS DISCOUNT
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£18,128.00	£2,000.00	£2,400.00	£2,000.00	£13,728.00	£199.98	£1,431,06
ARRANGEMENT FEES	OPTIONAL FINAL PAYMENT	MILEAGE PER ANNUM	EXCESS MILEAGE CHARGE PER MILE	TOTAL AMOUNT PAYABLE	3.7% APR REPRESENTATIVE	INCLUDES VAUXHALL PARTNERS DISCOUNT
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Riders line up to say goodbye to the Wolves speedway legend Peter Karlsson, who is seen kneeling, front

A handshake for legend Karlsson from ex-Wolves rider Ricky Wells

Karlsson and Freddie Lindgren on the podium at Monmore

PK on the shale during Sunday's final race meeting

PK's thanks as bumper turnout bids farewell

A BUMPER crowd flocked to Monmore Green to bid a final farewell to Wolves speedway hero Peter Karlsson.

One of the club's all-time greats, Karlsson first rode for Wolves back in 1990. And the super Swede was given a fitting send-off on Sunday night.

Joined by good friend and current Wolves star Freddie Lindgren to make up the Wolves Legends, the duo – with the help of reserves Kyle Howarth and Max Clegg – came out on top against six other pairings including the Swedish Wolves Jacob Thorssell and Magnus Karlsson.

"It has been a pleasure. It has been fantastic," said Karlsson. "I am thrilled, very pleased the event went as well as it did – everybody who turned up seemed to enjoy it.

"All the riders put on a good show, I saw out a few and gave some of the reserves a go so it was a good night all-round."

Former World Champion Sam Ermolenko was also on hand on the evening which saw an auction take place in the main bar following the races, selling Karlsson kevlars, helmets and team race jackets.

Karlsson added: "It has been a life-changing experience for me here.

Involved

"I came here while I was pretty young and I lived here for a while and learnt so much.

"This club means a lot to me and I would like to thank everybody who came out for the event, I hope they had a good time.

"Wolverhampton, it feels like – and has been – a second home to me."

Legend Karlsson thanked all involved with Wolves speedway for the faith shown in him over the years as he said farewell to the club.

The 47-year-old Swede had his final meeting at Monmore Green on Sunday night in front of a jam-packed crowd.

His feats at the club include helping them to the 2009 Elite League title, despite suffering a broken collarbone two weeks prior to the play-off final.

SPORTING MEMORIES

By Joe Edwards

"I will really miss it but then again, I would like to think I managed to repay them a bit over the years."

He played a huge role last term, too, as they beat Belle Vue over two legs to win the Elite League, and also lifted the trophy in 2002. Having ridden for Wolves, on and off, since 1990, the club is very close to Karlsson's heart and he said: "I'm pleased the club kept so much faith in me.

"Over the years, we have shown that we are a big family.

"When I started here, it was Sam Ermolenko and Ronnie Correy and then it was me and my brother, Mikael and now it's Freddie Lindgren and Jacob Thorssell – we have all passed it on to each other, that family spirit."

When asked if one particular moment stands out or whether the whole experience is the stand-out, he said: "Very much so (a collective), it's hard to pinpoint one particular thing.

"Of course, with winning the title last year that is the one fresh in the memory and the one that everyone thinks about.

"We have had so many great moments with so many different riders – the likes of Sam (Ermolenko) and Freddie (Lindgren) – over the years that I have been here."

On the back of last season's Elite League triumph, Karlsson believes the side is strong enough to be up there again this term.

"Definitely, because the club has managed to put a fantastic team together," he said.

"Max Clegg came through, out of nowhere, to help us win the title last year and it's the same with Kyle Howarth.

"It would be great to see the club get back-to-back titles."

Having been such a big part of his life, Karlsson knows he will miss the club dearly but feels he has repaid the support, and now is the time for the young guns to make a real impression.

"I will really miss it but then again, I would like to think I managed to repay them a bit over the years," he added.

"The fans have been fantastic all along – they want to win, just like we do.

"There has been some bad times too, don't get me wrong – injuries and things like that – but you come through them and you win, and that's what we did.

"My message to the fans is thank you for all the support, it means a lot to me."

Fans were keen to thank Karlsson for his spectacular efforts.

Simon Lowbridge, from Coseley, said: "He's been a true great for this club for many years, and for British speedway as a whole. Hopefully there will be many more like him here."

Tony Caldicott – who had travelled from Lakeside to be at the meeting – added: "He's a legend in his own lifetime.

"He is probably the most consistent rider I have seen."

Results:

1 WOLVES LEGENDS 35: Fredrik Lindgren 22, Peter Karlsson 7, Kyle Howarth 6, Max Clegg 0.

2 MONMORE NICE GUYS 31: Niels-Kristian Iversen 21, Adam Skornicki 8, Kyle Howarth 2.

3 BMR ROCKETS 30: Scott Nicholls 15, Chris Harris 15.

4 DANISH PIRATES 29: Hans Andersen 18, Nicolai Klindt 11.

5 PK STARS 24: Sam Masters 19, David Howe 5.

6 SWEDISH WOLVES 21: Jacob Thorssell 17, Magnus Karlsson 2, Kyle Howarth 2.

7 US YOUNG GUNS 19: Ricky Wells 19, Broc Nicol 0.

Strong relay squad is Bahamas bound

BLACK COUNTRY athletes Jarryd Dunn and Matthew Hudson-Smith have been selected by Great Britain to take part in the World Relay Championships in the Bahamas next month.

Dunn, aged 25, from Brownhills, and Hudson-Smith, 22, from Lanesfield, Wolverhampton, have both been selected in a full-strength 4x400m squad for the event in Nassau. Theo Campbell, Martyn Rooney, Delano Williams and Rabah Yousif make up the 4x400m line-up.

The event, which takes place from April 22-23, is being looked upon as a key part of the build-up to the 2017 World Athletics Championships in London in August.

Performance director for British Athletics Neil Black said: "We are taking these championships incredibly seriously, something we have shown by selecting our best possible teams.

"I am looking for the team to grasp this opportunity and make a big statement of intent in The Bahamas."

He added: "Our primary focus is firmly on the 4x100m and the 4x400m competitions – the events where we intend to be challenging for medals at London 2017."

No baize of glory as Evans loses title bid

DUDLEY snooker ace Reanne Evans saw her bid for a 12th Women's World Snooker Championship ended by her old foe Ng On Yee.

Evans lost at the semi-final stage to the Hong Kong player, describing her 5-4 defeat as 'shocking' on social media.

Evans, aged 31, has won the world title 11 times, including for 10 consecutive years from 2005 until 2014. The 2015 title was claimed by Yee – who had beaten Evans in the last four. But Evans gained revenge in last year's final.

She had cruised through to the semi-finals after defeating Germany's Diana Schuler 4-0 in the last 16 before despatching Thailand's Siriphaporn Nuanthakhamjan 4-1 in the quarter-finals – the only frame she had dropped up to that point.

In her quarter-final, Yee had struggled past Waratthanun Sukritthanes – the conqueror of Netherton's Maria Catalano in the last 16 – to win 4-3.

But she edged past Evans in the semi.

After coming unstuck, Evans: "Well that performance was shocking – threw it away #disgusted #itsonlyagame."

Eggington handed European title shot

STOURBRIDGE boxing star Sam Eggington has been handed a shot at a European title. The 23-year-old welterweight will take on Ceferino Rodriguez for the Spaniard's EBU belt at The Barclaycard Arena on May 13.

Eggington is aiming to continue his ascent in the sport after notching up the most impressive victory of his career earlier this month with an eighth-round stoppage of two-weight world champion Paulie Malignaggi.

Already a mandatory challenger for the EBU belt, Eggington's clash with Ceferino was last week confirmed as chief support for a show topped by Birmingham fighter Kal Yafai's first defence of his WBA super flyweight crown.

Ceferino has suffered just one defeat in a 25-fight professional career and will pose a test for Eggington, who has reeled off three straight wins after losing his British title to Bradley Skeete last March.

"I had to learn a lot after Skeete," said Eggington, who rose through the ranks as an amateur at Warley Boxing Club. "I have real hunger back after losing to Skeete and this is massive for me as I never thought I'd reach this level."

PFA chief should quit, says Dawn

THE daughter of Baggies legend Jeff Astle has called for the chief executive of the Professional Footballers' Association to resign to let a 'fighter' take over.

Dawn Astle has lobbied Gordon Taylor for years to look into the link between football and dementia.

The PFA insists it is fully committed' to funding independent research and is not passing the buck, but Dawn remains unsatisfied.

Her father died from a degenerative brain disease, at the age of 59, caused by heading footballs.

On Monday night, a tense January meeting between the pair, which ended with Dawn storming out, was broadcast on BBC One's Inside Out.

Dawn said: "It's absolutely dreadful. I feel let down by him. We get really angry about it because their whole existence is about player welfare. Out of everybody they should be doing it.

"When you're a footballer and you join the PFA you're a member for life.

"He's already told me they've been inundated by calls from families of former footballers about dementia.I don't think they've done enough in the 15 years since dad died."

In the meeting, the PFA chief said: "We've got a fraction of the resources of the Premier League, the Football League, the FA and FIFA. But I'm not passing the buck."

But Taylor, who has held his position since 1981, reportedly earns over £3.3million a year – and that argument rang hollow for Dawn.

Dawn added "He's got this whopping salary. The PFA is crying out for a fighter, not someone who dodges the questions. If he can't do it, if he hasn't got the will for whatever reason then he should go and they should replace him with someone who is a fighter."

£10m Baggies buy Livermore buzzing over England call

'BUZZING' Jake Livermore says his England call-up has boosted his confidence – and given his Baggies career a shot in the arm.

The 27-year-old central midfielder, a £10m signing for the Baggies, was keen to get a chance against either Germany or Lithuania, and in turn hopes to stay in Gareth Southgate's thoughts.

Livermore said Tony Pulis had broken the news to him at Albion's training ground last week. He added playing for his country would be 'special' after the past two years he's had.

"It certainly gives you a nice buzz," Livermore said. "It gives you that added confidence. To be honest my main focus was trying to cement a place in this team and do well for my club.

"Anything on top of that was a bonus. If you look at where I've come from in the last 18 months or two years it would be a special moment."

In 2015, Livermore tested positive for cocaine but he escaped the usual two-year FA ban because of mitigating circumstances. He had turned to the drug after his son died during birth.

Keeper Fosters hospice relationships

Mark Naylor, Albion Academy goalkeeper coach, Frank Burns snr, hospice patient and Ben Foster

WEST Bromwich Albion goalkeeper Ben Foster gave patients and staff at Mary Stevens Hospice a welcome surprise when he popped in for a visit.

The Baggies and England stopper met patients to learn more about the work done by the charity and delighted staff by posing for pictures and signing autographs.

He took a tour of the hospice, in Hagley Road, Stourbridge, alongside Mark Naylor, Albion Academy goalkeeping coach, Andy Pountney and Andy Bullingham, chairman and vice-chairman of Stourbridge FC and Matt Webb, who co-founded the Stourbridge v WBA legends charity match which will be played at Stourbridge FC on April 2.

Foster donated a signed shirt towards an auction that will take place after the charity clash.

Stevan Jackson, chief executive officer Mary Stevens Hospice Group, said: "England goalkeeper Ben Foster caused quite a stir and he and the other visitors spent much time talking to patients and staff – irrespective of their footballing affiliations."

Naylor, charity match co-founder, said: "The hospice is a charity which Matt (Webb) and I have become incredibly close to."

The charity match takes place at the War Memorial Athletic Ground, in High Street, Amblecote with the gates opening at 1pm.

Contact Amanda Bowen, on amanda@mshfundraising.co.uk to get involved.

PULIS GETS ONE OVER OLD FOE

Albion 3 Arsenal 1

AGE may have mellowed the rivalry that once fiercely bubbled away, but the contrasting styles still remain.

Tony Pulis versus Arsene Wenger has been one of the all-time battles of footballing philosophies in the Premier League, the polar opposites of hard chalk and gourmet cheese.

Pulis has had plenty of success against Wenger in the past but he's arguably never done a number on the French architect quite like this, *writes Matt Wilson*.

Albion had just 23 per cent possession but they had more shots than the Gunners – and four times as many on target. They dealt Arsenal a lesson in frugality and showed them how to make the most of the ball when you have it.

The visitors may have kept possession for long periods and probed at the Baggies back-line over and over again, but they rarely got in behind.

Delivering

James McClean had a hand in all three of the goals, winning the corner for the first – scored by Craig Dawson, cutting inside and finding Nacer Chadli to set up the second for Hal Robson-Kanu and delivering the corner himself for the third, Dawson's second goal of the day.

The defender's goals were Albion's 18th and 19th of the season from set-plays. No team has scored more and it was a reward for the training ground sessions that focused on Arsenal's zonal marking.

Before this game, owner Guochuan Lai had never seen Albion win. Since he bought a majority stake in the club for £175million last summer he's been to the home games against Everton, Tottenham, the two Manchester clubs, and now Arsenal.

He likes the big games. Unfortunately for him, Albion's record against the top seven had been hitherto dismal.

But their first win of the season against a top-seven team removes any grumbles about downing tools, and ends that awful record against sides above them. It also leaves them two wins away from their record haul in the Premier League.

Craig Dawson scores the first goal against Arsenal on the way to a 3-1 win

Aiming to steel a march on rivals

SANDWELL Steelers head coach Ross Barrow has targeted promotion in his first season at the helm.

Barrow will lead the Steelers in their fourth year of action and is determined to build on the impressive progress that has seen the club reel off back-to-back divisional championships and a promotion.

The Steelers, who play their home games at the Tipton Sports Academy, topped the NFC 1 South standings last season but missed out on another step up in class when they lost to Bury in the play-off semi-finals. They begin their campaign on April 16 at home to Coventry Jets. And Barrow, who was acting head coach through the play-offs following the departure of Jay Alexander, said: "Promotion is the goal we have in mind. That's what we are aiming for."

Steelers' five-team division also includes Birmingham Bulls, Leicester Falcons and Nottingham Caesars. They play 10 games, with three against both Leicester and Coventry.

Steelers, meanwhile, have teamed up with the Buddy Bag Foundation and will donate 20 per cent of its fundraising activities to the foundation throughout the year.

Dwyer awaits home start for Heathens

CRADLEY launch their home National League campaign with one of their Perry Barr meetings next Wednesday.

The Heathens face King's Lynn in the first of what is expected to be three outings at Birmingham – with the rest at Monmore Green.

It's a throwback to the launch of the new era in 2010 when they shared venues – and this season they have a combination of new and familiar faces.

Connor Dwyer

Tom Perry, Dan Greenwood and Luke Harris all return – but for Connor Dwyer it means a home debut in Heathens colours. "It's a really good opportunity for me to be at Cradley," Dwyer said. "I'm really looking forward to it and I just want to make the most out of the chance.

"It's a good club, and I'm going into this season with the same sort of mindset I've had every year. I'll always try to improve my average and just keep progressing and moving in the right direction. I've done a lot of laps at Wolverhampton, probably more than I did at Coventry last year, so I'm really excited to have that as my home track."

Dwyer linked up with his new teammates for the first time at their season launch night earlier this month and says they are already developing a strong team spirit.

He added: "Everyone gets on really well already. I've known Tom (Perry) and Dan (Greenwood) for a long time and they are two great lads who I'm pleased to be riding with. There is already a good team spirit developing."

Leek springs to the rescue of Brummies

TEENAGER Macauley Leek was set to make his Birmingham Brummies debut this week.

Leek, aged 17, was set to feature in the home clash against Cradley at Perry Barr last night (Wednesday), lining up as reserve in place of the injured Kean Dicken.

Dicken suffered a broken tibia during press and practice night last week and is expected to be sidelined for a minimum of six weeks.

"It looks as though Kean could be out of action for quite a while so we needed to move pretty quickly," said team boss Graham Drury.

★★★

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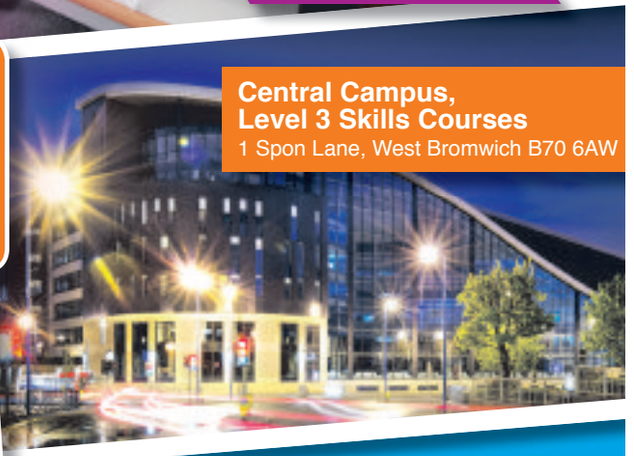

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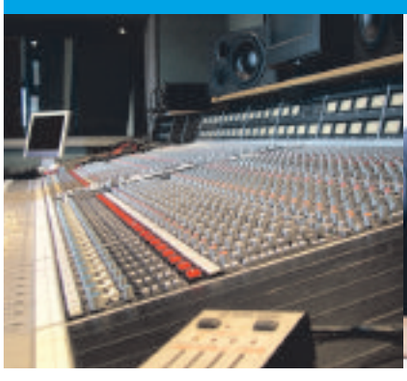

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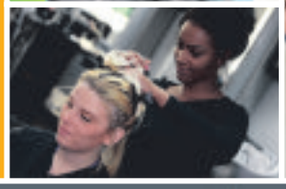

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